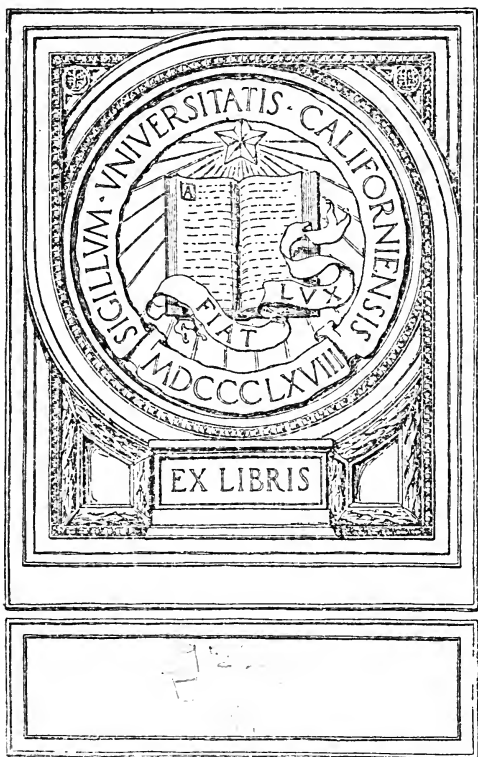
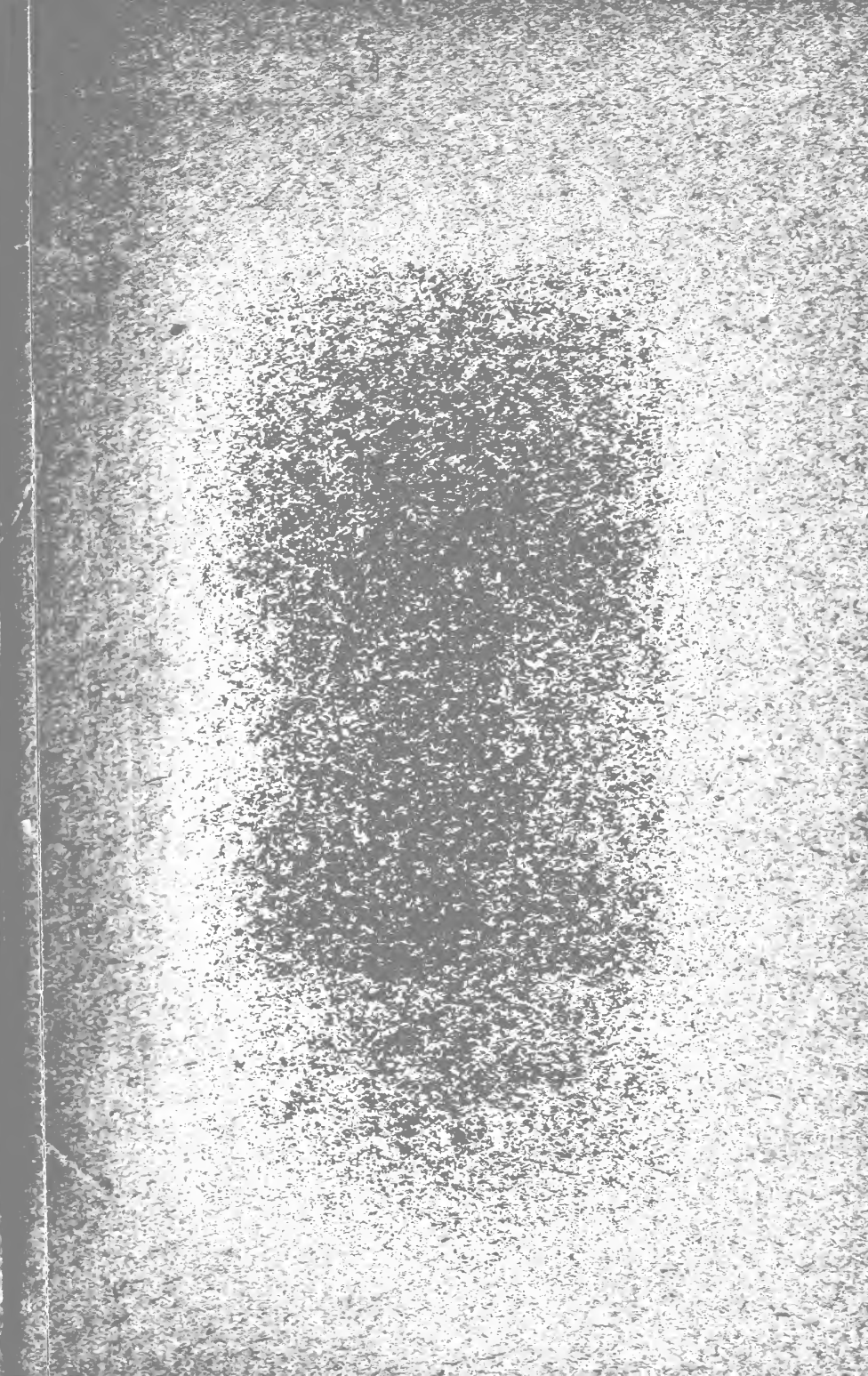


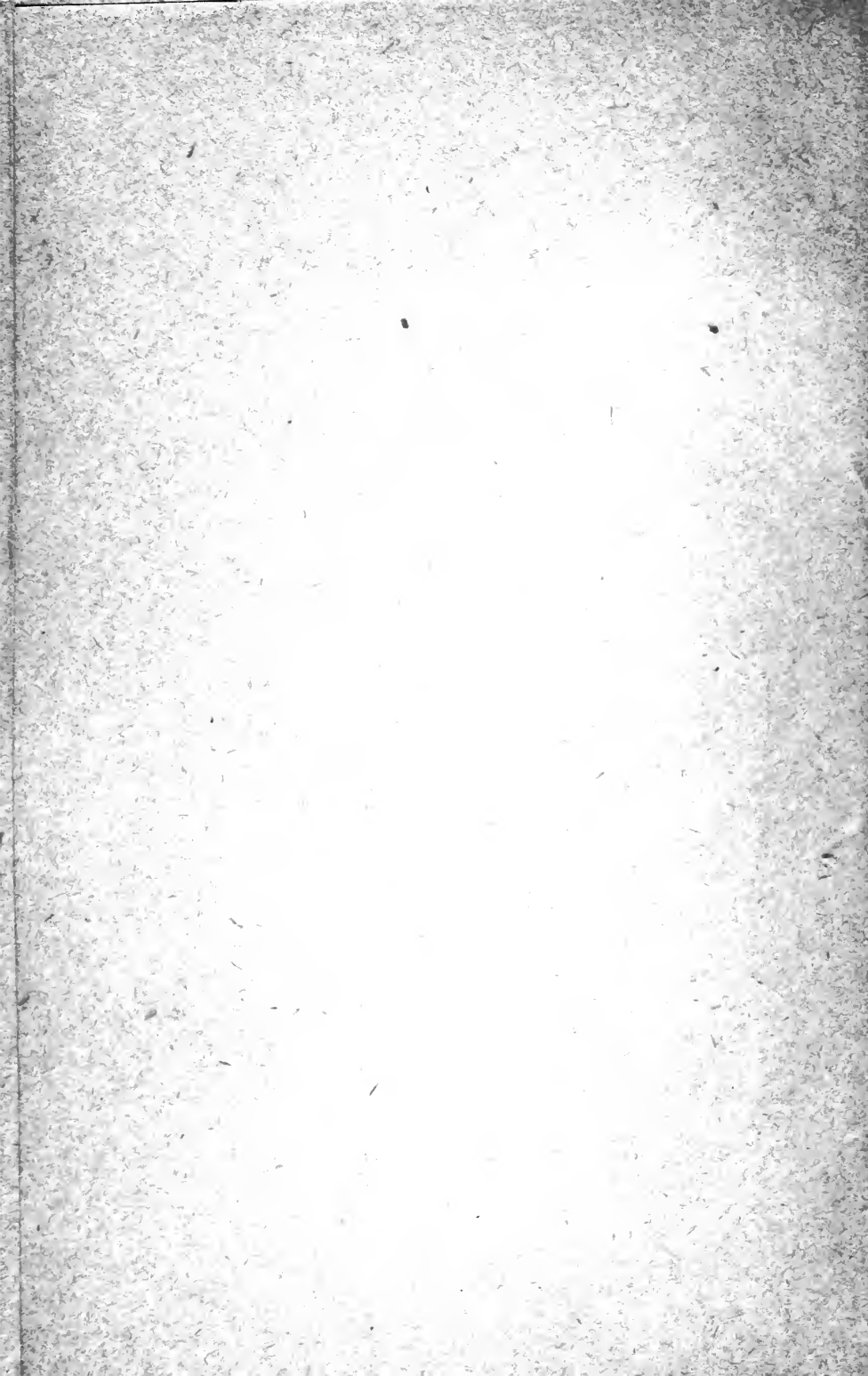
A HOUSE OF LETTERS

EDITED BY ERNEST BETHAM

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A HOUSE OF LETTERS

A House of Letters

Being Excerpts from the Correspondence of Miss Charlotte Jerningham (the Honble. Lady Bedingfeld), Lady Jerningham, Coleridge, Lamb, Southey, Bernard and Lucy Barton, and others, with Matilda Betham; and from Diaries and various sources; and a Chapter upon Landor's Quarrel with Charles Betham at Llanthony. Also notes of some phases in the evolution of an English family



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ERNEST BETHAM

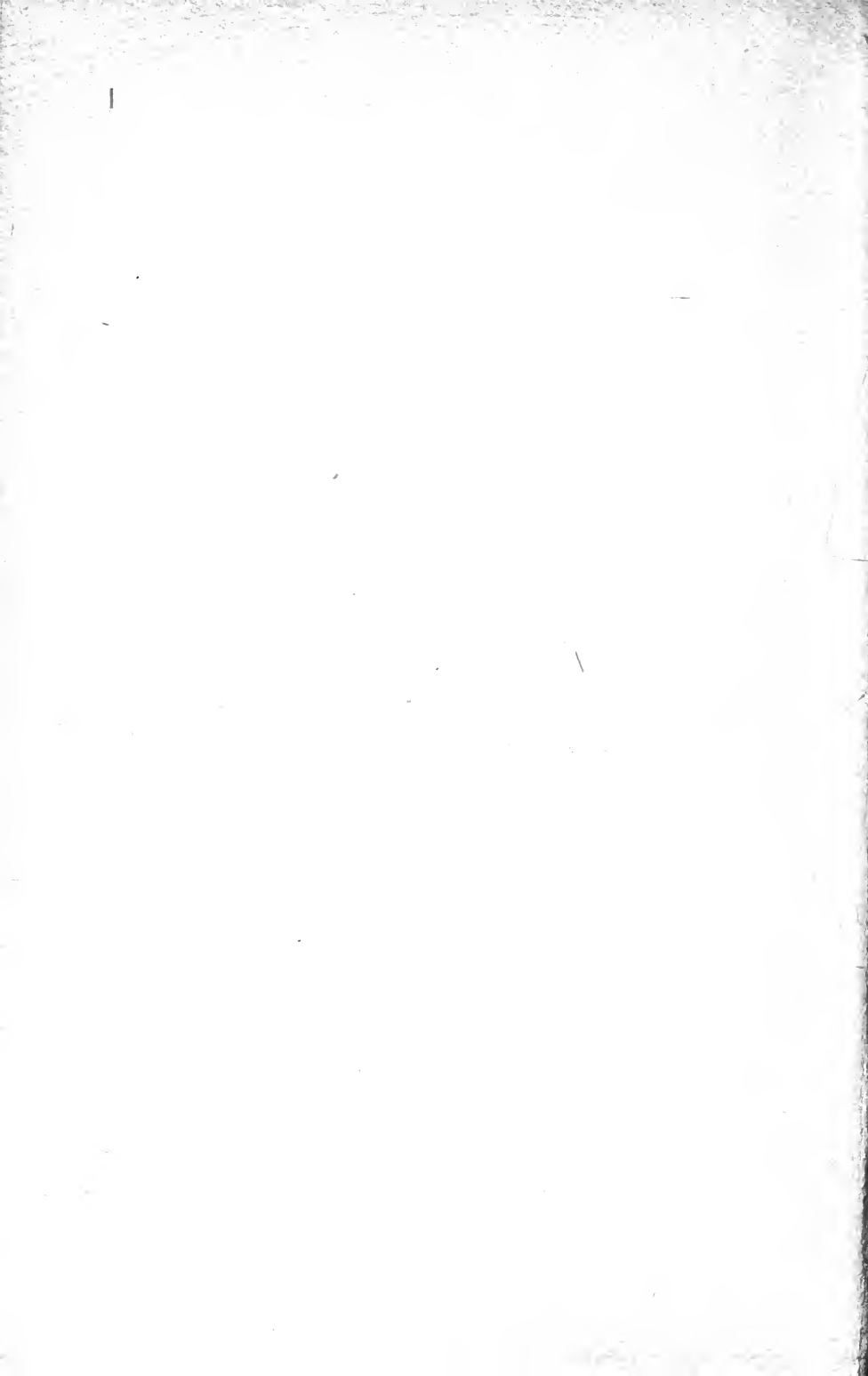
A NEW EDITION

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TO
MARGARET BETHAM
AND
MATILDA BETHAM.EDWARDS,
KINSWOMEN OF MATILDA BETHAM.

550037





QUEEN VICTORIA.

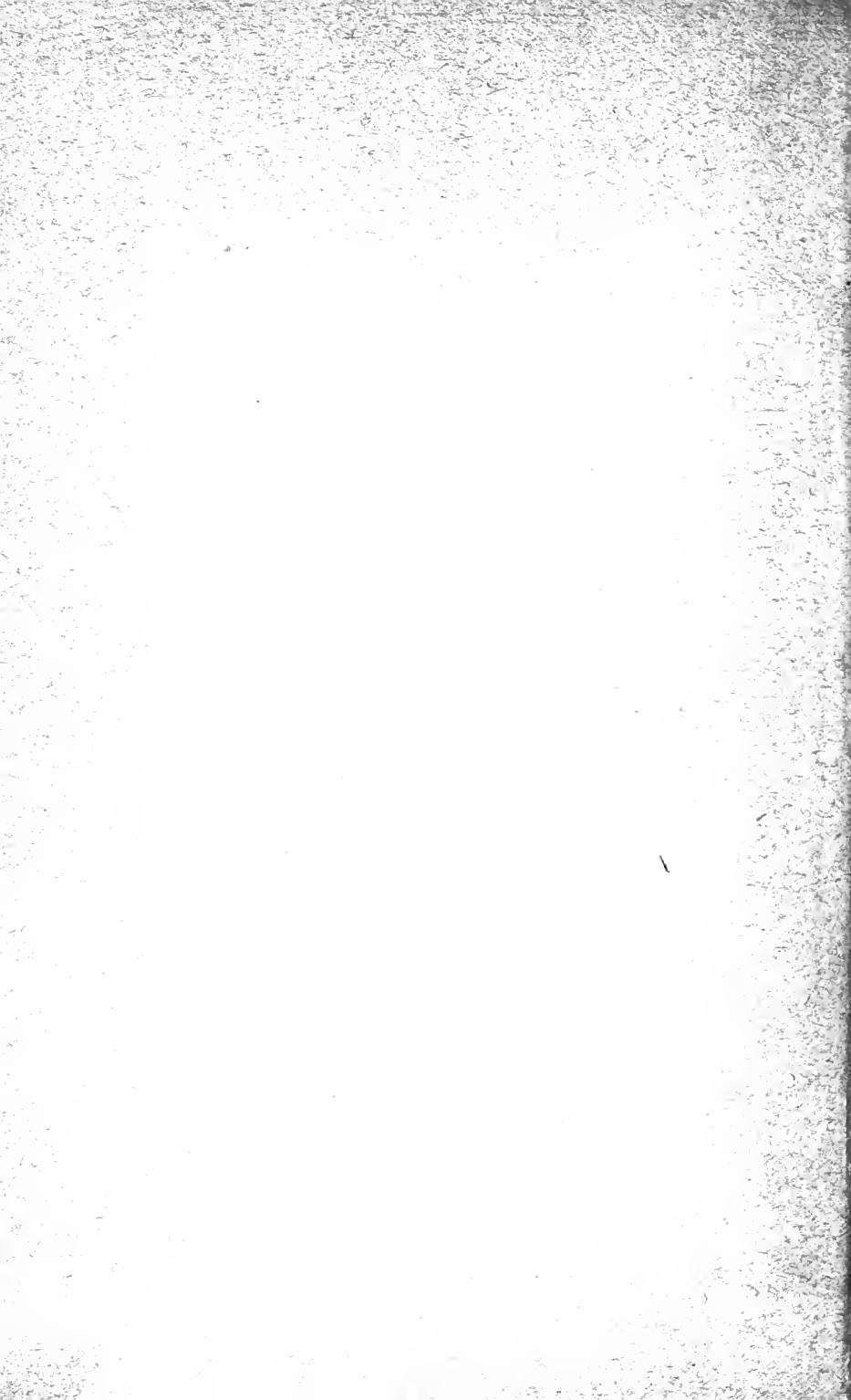
Presented by Her Majesty to Mr. Albert Beetham, Adjutant of
H.M. Hon. Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms.

from a Miniature by Sir William Ross.



Univ. of
CALIFORNIA

*The Editor is indebted to Mr. Ernest
Hartley Coleridge for the use of Letters from
S. T. Coleridge and Mrs. Coleridge to
Matilda Betham.*



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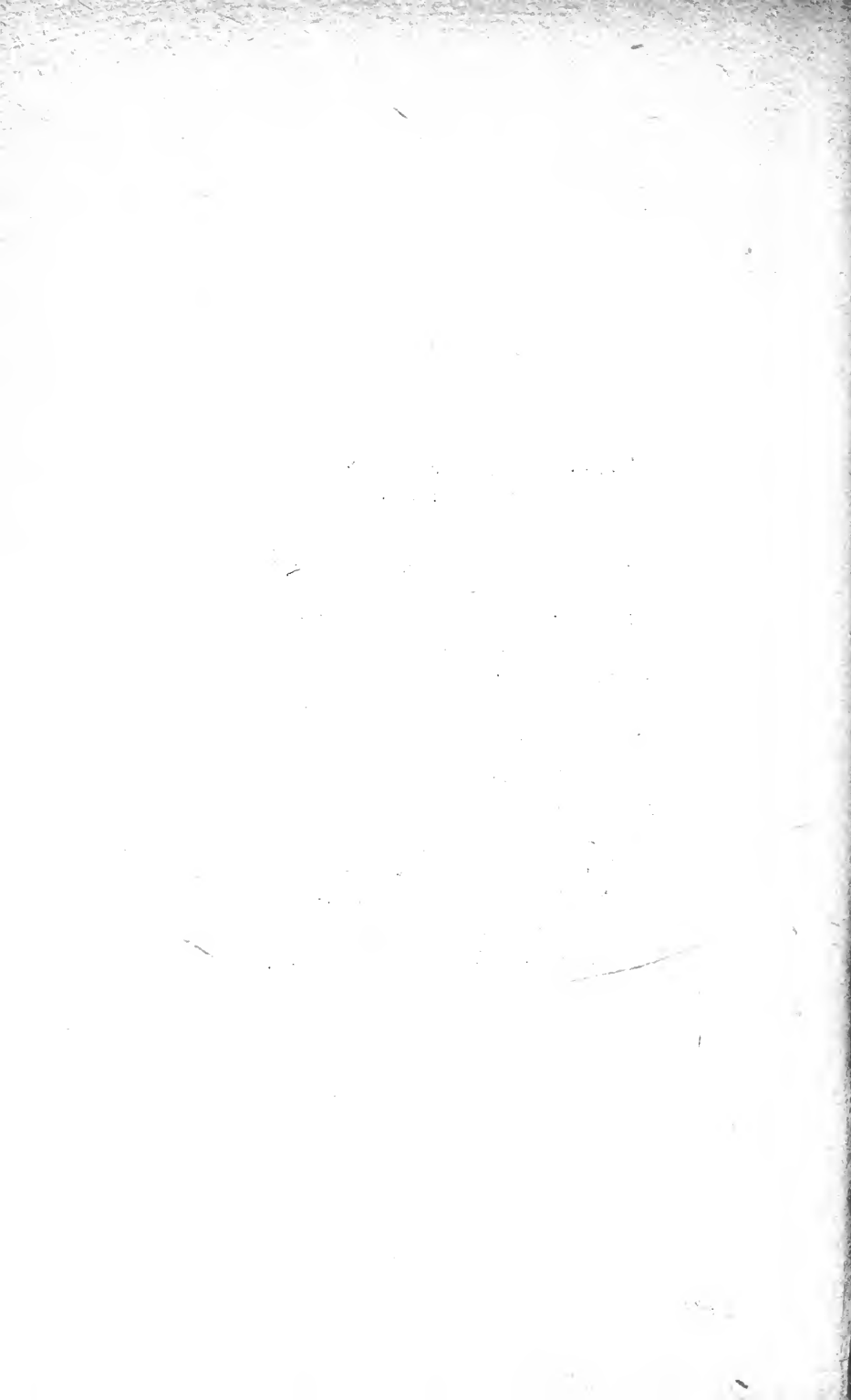
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AT THE GATE.

Welcome, if you Gentle be,
To this dwelling's Courtesy;
Lo, the dial'd porch invites
'Dond twin rows of branching heights.

Its Mistress is a Woman mild,
Full of Visions as a Child.
By the Friends she made her own,
And this Bower be she be known;
'Tis a Haunt most homely-human,
Gossipful with Men and Women,
Yet its bloomy casements glance
Into Cobe, and into Chance

As the moment's mortals go
Touch'd by Jollity or Woe,
Ever hasting to and fro,
Time's strong Town of Circumstance



A HOUSE OF LETTERS.

PART I.

THE OLD AVENUE.

ON the parchment cover of an old diary (forerunner of many) is inscribed :

“MEMORANDUM BOOK,
FROM MY BIRTH, 1776, TILL JULY, 1795.”

It was written at Stonham Aspall, Suffolk, in a house that overlooked the village green there, from which it was fenced by a hedge of poplars, planted by William Betham, the Diarist's father. To distinguish this William from other William Bethams, he will, in this book, be designated the Poplar-planter. He migrated to Suffolk from the north-western Fells.

The first of the family who can be authenticated was a man named Ralph. The only definite statement as to his forbears that has been found is in the Lancashire Assize Rolls 30-31, Hen: III., M. 12 (1244-45) relative to a suit brought against his son, Sir Thomas, for exercising right of common in “Yholand,” though its lord, Mathew de Redman, exercised no such rights in Betham. Sir Thomas'

case was "That his ancestors since the Conquest, and for time without mind, have wont to common in the lands of the ancestors of Alice and Mathew in the said Vill, without any reciprocal rights." The aforesaid Ralph was in enjoyment of the Manor of Betham in the time of Henry II. In the reign of Edward III. his sixth heir-male and namesake held possession. A younger brother of this later Sir Ralph, Robert, moved to the edge of the Fells that look towards Scotland, and command the valley-road into England on the western side of the Border. Here, at Thrimby, he obtained land and lordship. His son married the heiress of a Cumberland family, the Collinsons of Castlecarrock, and from this union a numerous progeny sprang. Local superstition attributed the remarkable increase of the north Westmorland Bethams to the watch and ward kept over them by a ghostly hound. The legend is preserved in Mr. Halliwell Sutcliffe's novel of "Shameless Wayne."

The Ralphian and senior section of the race had enjoyed various privileges. Scotch prisoners' ransoms swelled their coffers, and Henry V. included them in his commission to muster men-at-arms in the year to be blazoned by Agincourt. Seven of them rode to Parliament, and, beside Betham, they owned half a dozen parishes, a strip of sea-board, a wooded islet, hunting towers, hills of rock and hills of verdure. They termed their lands "demesnes," they signed their names with a "de," and married Musgraves and Nevilles. One long-sighted knight even willed two salt-works to the Abbot of Furness and his crosiered heirs for his alliance in a region where he claimed personal influence. But lacking

the guardian hound, or for some less dramatic reason, they passed away.

The waters of the Betha now revolve a paper-mill; the demesnes have sunk to the vernacular monosyllable of "mains"; the walls of the old stone strong-box serve the mild use of shell to a farmhouse; pigs grunt where the seneschal tramped; Bank Holiday English capture its snug village annually; and its forest back-ground is dotted now and again with mansions belonging to those whom the ticket-collector, in irreverence not unmingled with awe, defines as "Manchester pots." Stone effigies in the church, and remnants of stained-glass arms in adjacent castles like Sizergh, whose one-time masters married from their race, alone remain as tokens of the line.

Of the more northerly Bethams, mention continued to be found, not always of the gentlest. A Roger Betham, of Towcett, appeared with others of "the principal offenders that were present with their complices at the incursions, murders, burnings, mutilations and spoils committed presently after the Queen's (Mary of Scotland) Majesty's departure, and contained in the Bills of Complaints exhibited to the Lord Bishop of Carlisle." Thomas Salkeld (maternally Betham), was Deputy Warden of the Marches in his day, and permanently occupies an unhappy position in Border legend as the recipient of a Scottish spear when Buccleuch raided Carlisle:

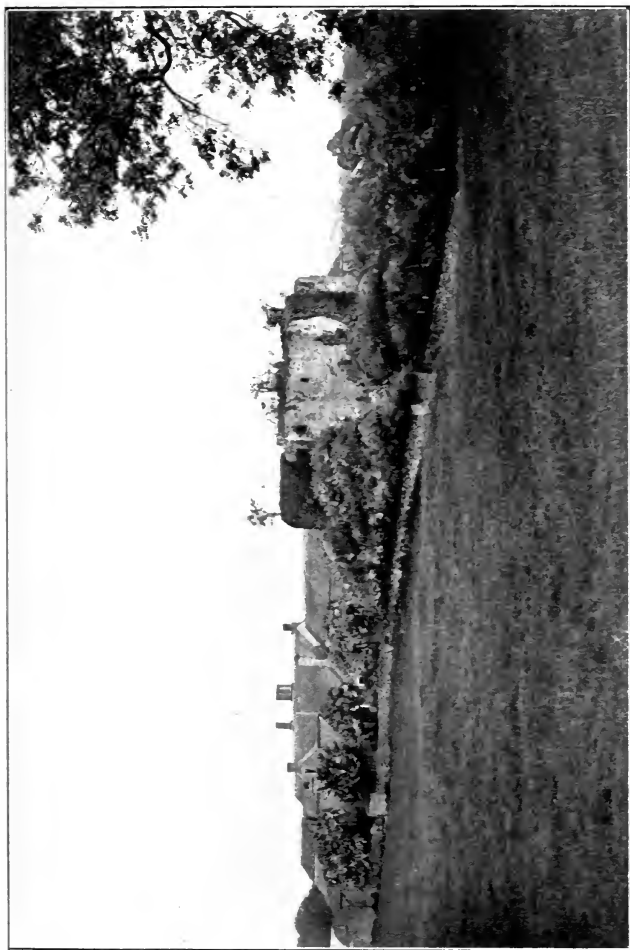
"Then nevir a word had Dickie to say,
Sae he thrust the lance through his fause bodie,"

as the Scottish minstrel tells it; while the English

version, though allowing the spear-thrust into "Dickie's," alias Thomas Salkeld's body, substitutes a physical adjective for the moral one, going no further than to call it fat.

The first mentioned author of the family was Peter Betham, who went to Oxford in 1533, and took his degree. of B.A. in 1536; Phavier, of Virgilic fame, has a laudatory poem on his translation into English of "The Precepts of Warre." John and William Betham, in 1566 and 1580 respectively, took their M.A. at Oxford (Queen's and Brasenose), while others of them are in Foster's "Alumni Oxon." The Puritan movement was marked in the family by the appointment of Francis Betham as "Provost Marshall for the Safeguard of Parliament," on September 23rd, 1648; the Catholic rally by John Betham, of Sorbonne.

This John Betham was Confessor to James II. and tutor to the Pretender; he appears to have been "a person of strict morals, grave and reserved in conversation. The court was his cell, and he seldom appeared in public but when duty called him forth." The following letter, the original of which is in the possession of the Society of Jesus, may be of interest here. In 1692 a French fleet and army were made ready to invade England. Admiral Russell met the fleet at La Hogue and utterly defeated it. Sir Edward Hales, to whom these "transactions at sea" were so scantily known, was titular Earl of Tenterden. He went to St. Germain's in 1690. Doubtless the "Mr. Stafford" to whom reference is made, was a member of the family from whom descended to the Jerninghams the Barony of Stafford.



RUINS OF BEETHAM CASTLE.

The adjacent building is a Farmstead, the present Beetham Hall.



*Letter from Dr. John Betham to Sir Edward Hales.
June, 1692.*

"HON^d. SIR,

"I am in your debt for three, of ye 26 and 31 of May & the last of the second of June. I wonder much that the transactions at sea are so little known to you, by this time you will be better informed and by it rest convinced your designed expedition must be put off till a more favourable season. The daily account we had how things passed made me defer writing to you, not doubting but that in a few days you would remove from Haver. I was faithful to you in not communicating your thoughts to any person living, but now all mankind is of your mind. My Lord Melfort passed by St. Germaines and is gone to ye King of France. Mr. Stafford went away upon Thursday toward ye great Monarch. Her Majesty holds out yet and God be praised bears our late news like herself with much courage and resignation. Why would you stay at Roan? If the King be here, it will not look well, especially if you should continue there any long time. Your design of retiring some time since was a great mortification to ye Kings friends and I am confident the same would appear again did they know you had any such thoughts left. Unless your reasons for it were very strong. But there will be time enough to discourse of this when we meet, for you must see the Queen after she is brought to bed. I should have writ to Mr. Brown but old addresses are now out of date, so I must expect till he favours me with a new one. The Prince is very well and grows

wonderful learned. As yet all things with him goe on well enough. Your letters are long in coming, four days the least, sometimes more which is a mortification to

“Hon^d. Sir

“Your faithful servant

“J. BETHAM.

“*June ye 7/92.*

(To) “Monsieur

“Mons^r. Chevalier Hales

“Chez Mon^r. Portress

“Marchant

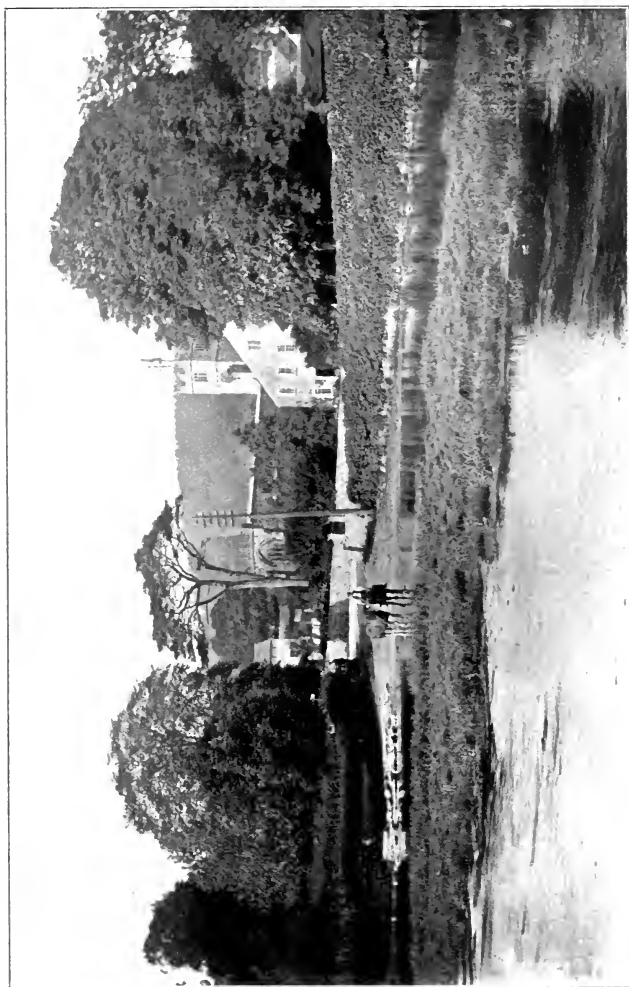
“à Rouen.”

The union of the crowns under the first James had occasioned the laying down of the national, but not the local sword. The spread of peaceable industry in the Border Counties was not entirely possible till a hundred years later, when reprisals and feuds had ceased. When the rose of romance had become not only full-blown, but its shattered petals lay forlorn; when no longer the cows belonging to gentlemen t'other side Cheviot could be honourably stolen; when defensive shelter was assaulted by nothing more fearsome than bad weather; then down came the stone tower, and up like a smiling phoenix sprang the homestead. Speedily began an exodus of younger sons. A new branch of the Bethams took root in Warwickshire (*viâ* Berks and Oxon), settling finally at Rowington. The beginner of it was a cadet from Thrimby, who first became a tenant of the Earl of Derby in Beetham itself. It was from this section, the sole Catholic one in the family, that the Pretender's tutor came, and an eventual descendant, a fair and

fateful woman, was contemporary with the Poplar-planter as Duchess of Norfolk. The heir to another branch, after transferring his natal acres to a cousin, became rector of Silchester, in Hants, and was the first to apply himself to the history of that now heather-mantled but once imperial place. He was less happily distinguished by being found drowned in the Fleet Ditch (1719), witness to the insecurity of life in the London of those days. Gough says of him: "We might probably have seen in print a good account of the ancient vindomis at Silchester had not an unfortunate death overtaken the learned Mr. Robert Betham, rector of the Place, where he had frequent opportunities of considering the various Roman remains, and of collecting a large number of medals on the spot." His son, Edward Betham, used his means for the furtherance of education, having given an endowment to the Botanical Gardens at Cambridge, and built and endowed a Free School at Greenford, in Middlesex, of which place he was Rector. He became one of the preachers at Whitehall, and erected a statue of Edward VI. at Eton, of which school he was a Fellow.

Another Westmorland offshoot was represented by a Collector of Customs in the Isle of Man. The "Dict. Nat. Biog." says of his only daughter, Elizabeth Betham: "She was a woman of superior attainments, whose father was a scholar and the friend of Hume, Black, Adam Smith, and Robertson": (this comment occurs under the name "Bligh," she having married William Bligh, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, and Governor of New South Wales, better known as the unfortunate Captain of the "Bounty").

The land tenure of the Border Counties underwent a curious transformation on the accession of James. He endeavoured to seize as direct Overlord all the estates in Cumberland and Westmorland which were held by the ancient Border Service. But the holders replied that they had retained the land by right of their swords, and that they were still prepared to do so. Their independence and resolute attitude led to the withdrawal of the royal claim, and the recognition of absolute ownership on the part of the Borderers. Unfortunately for them, it had previously been the aim of each family head to claim as little land for actual property as was possible, thus while keeping a zone of vacant hinterland around themselves, avoiding certain duties and responsibilities that would have come upon them with the greater extent of miles. This debatable land was used by them for their cattle, but nominally considered as waste, all agricultural operations being of an exceedingly partial kind until permanent peace came about. When this new state of things did occur, and every acre of land became of value, the Borderers were limited by their previous claims as to their possessions; and these, having been originally put at the minimum of ground round their peel towers, had so to remain, while the huge strips of "No-Man's-Land" fell to the Crown or the greater lordships. But even at that, the Bethams of the Fellshad substantial ownership in land at Thrimby, Towcett, Newby, and Little Strickland. Compared to the average "statesmen," as the descendants of tenants under Military Tenure in the "Western Marches anent Scotland" were called, they were large owners. Their lands lay together, an outcome of the old fighting times, when men mustered under a family



BEETHAM VILLAGE,
With view of River Betha.

head. Stowe has a note to the effect that gentlemen of the Borders in the fourth year of King James "began to contende in lawe about their bounds, challenging then, that for their hereditarie right, which formerly they disavowed, only to avoyed charge for common defence." The Border families, like the neighbouring lairds in the south of Scotland, eventually derived their income from enormous herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

By 1745 three divisions of the Bethams remained in Westmorland; those at Towcett, Little Strickland, and Burton. The first-mentioned patrimony remained with the family till 1898, which year extinguished the last of the Betham hearth-fires in the Thrimby centre, terminating a continuous occupancy there of nearly six centuries.

It is with Little Strickland we are now concerned. Fragmentary records of three of its holders, John, Edward, and William Betham—respectively great-grandfather, grandfather, and father of the Poplar-planter—cause them to be discernible individually through the mist of the past. The great-grandfather was a friend of the notable Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury; the grandfather collected a library; the father was "out against the Scots with his men and horses" on the 15th and 16th December, 1745.

William Betham, who subsequently crossed to Suffolk and planted the poplars at Stonham Aspell, was born at the Long House, Little Strickland, in 1749. After attending a school kept by a Mr. Matthews, he passed to the "Great School of Bampton" (at that time under the mastership of a Langhorne, uncle to the translator of Plutarch). Trifling notes of his juvenility portray him as fond of putting

ribbons in his cap, of fishing the crystal streams amid the hills, and of such occasional indoor employ as constructing an orrery. He became an expert wrestler, and could bear away the belt at a public contest. At the age of twenty-two he entered the Church of England, being ordained by the Bishop of Lincoln in 1771. At that time he was "a fair man, six feet in height, neither thin nor corpulent, with a high forehead, bright blue eyes, hair naturally curling, and features bold and pleasing."

A glimpse into William Betham's boyhood comes from Canada. The late Sir John Abbott, one of its premiers, was third cousin to the Poplar-planter, and a letter from his father to one of the latter's children in subsequent years thus runs: "Remember that our loved Fathers were boys at school together; class fellows, and relatives, and, better still, friends. They were brought up in the same part of Westmorland. While a boy, my father's grandmother, in accordance with the simple habits of the country in which they lived, sent him to get a lot of dry thorns to heat her 'griddle' with, to make a batch of oaten cakes. It was a holiday, a Saturday I believe, and his cousin Betham had come to have a play with him, and so they went together to fetch the thorns in a great hurry, so as to get off as soon as possible to a nutting expedition to a hazel dingle, called in the parlance of the locality the Tow Gill. Well, each got his bunch of thorns, and away they went in a race to the house; in my Father's bunch some branch had got bent backward, but in his rapid motion it sprang again to its original position, and in doing so, it struck his eye, and extinguished its light for ever.

"I will tell you how I first made acquaintance with your father. When staying in England years ago I rode over one fine morning to Long Stratton, which was the nearest post-office to where I was located, to get my letters and papers; had my horse put in the stable, and went to the room in the inn where the post-office was kept, and sat down to read the papers;—in one corner of the room was a young lady in travelling costume looking out of the window in a dreamy state of mental abstraction, while a tall, elderly gentleman was stalking backwards and forwards the whole length of the room, which was rather a long one. I took up a paper and read, or *tried* to read rather, for I could not, in consequence of discovering that this gentleman had his eyes constantly and intently fixed upon me. Whenever I looked up I met his eye, and felt it was on me when I attempted to read. At last he brought himself up to a standstill with a *round turn*, as the sailors say, and said abruptly, without preface or apology, 'Sir, is not your name Abbott?' That was how I made the acquaintance of your father, my father's early comrade. Though I had heard my father often speak of him at home in Canada I was ignorant of his whereabouts; he was himself ignorant of my existence until he saw me there. He gave me a cordial invitation to Stonham."

At the age of twenty-six, William Betham married Mary, daughter of Thomas Damant, of Eye. The Damants (or Dammants) were originally Huguenot emigrants. Thomas Damant gave his daughter a dower, and subsequently bequeathed

property to her; he possessing estate in Boston, Lincolnshire. This Thomas would appear in his young days to have been an agreeable but wealthless man: his engagement to the future Mrs. Damant, then Prudence Cowper, was disliked by an aunt, who was also her guardian, and she offered the stubborn damsel "a complete new dress of yellow damask, and an additional £1000 to her fortune, if she would forego it." "I liked my husband better than that," said the lively Prudence. Unless an old account greatly lie, their daughter would have left nothing for the most scrupulous family critic to cavil at, and Westmorland folk were proverbially exacting in regard to such matters. Their circumstance compelled them to be more particular in regard to physical than monetary wealth. The main need, in the days of military tenure, was that there should be able limbs and steady hearts when it came to talking with the enemy at the gate, especially if it chanced to be at his gate. Moreover, where, owing to winter's besiegement and an absence of overcrowding, the total of talking society was often represented by the conubial *vis-a-vis*, it was to be desired that the face opposite one's own should not be calculated to irritate. This practical utility of beauty begot a lasting creed, which still lingers locally, and may even now be come on in a perverted form and amid unlikely neighbourhood, witness as instance "Billy Tyson o' Sleddale's" summing up of some objectionable local politicians. Says he: "I ken ya, yer o' bad foke, en ya lee, en yer ugly, en sum a yer gert granfadders ha' been hanged!" the reference to their failure in personal handsomeness

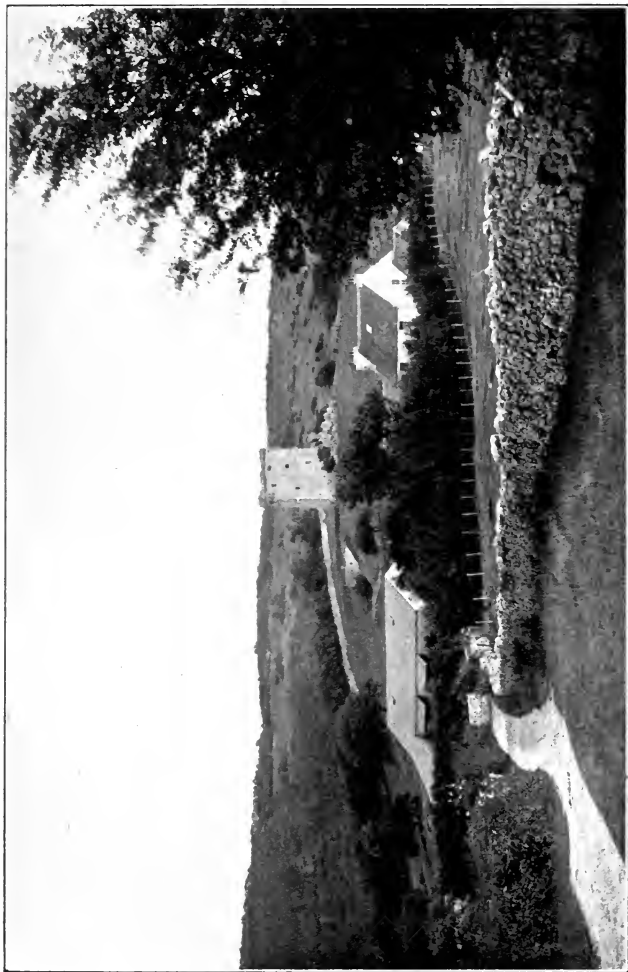
possessing primarily a moral significance, simple but direct, in the sky-seeking county where neither the Saxon Duke who measured so much round, his friends had to entertain him in their barns, nor a steam-plough could be entirely happy.

Soon after espousal, the Suffolk curate took his young bride to make her known to the northern kin. Since he had left his father's roof, one chair had become vacant, that of his paternal grandmother, a cheerful old dame who, two days after her hundredth birthday, the weather being fine, took momentary part in the young folks' game, touching the ball with her foot for no other reason than the pretty vanity of saying she had played trap-ball at a "hundred and two." At the time of the curate's visit, his mother was just over sixty, his father seventy-eight; and though robust, doubtless glad, when the winds played, to rest on the still side of a great yew hedge that then flourished. The mother was first cousin to Septimus Collinson of Oxford. The Collinsons were an old and representative Border family, and it may be noted that Peter Collinson of Windermere, a correspondent of Benjamin Franklin, was of them.

The longest portion of the Poplar-planter's life was spent in Suffolk. For a time he was curate of Stradbroke. Like several of the family he was given to painting, and exhibited skill at portraiture. In connection with this, there is a note to the effect that while at Stradbroke he was presented by a relative of Bishop Sanscroft, both with that prelate's sermon-case, and a palette of Lely's: small matters, but which show his sympathies. Before his ordination he had been a schoolmaster at

Keswick, and then tutor to the young Marquis of Lindsey, son of Peregrine, Duke of Ancaster. After leaving Stradbrook he became curate-in-charge of Earl Stonham, and combined with his clerical duties the mastership of the Free School at Stonham Aspell, rebuilding it in part at his private expense. In teaching his own children, he drew out a table showing the kinship of the monarchs of Europe to explain to them the relation of dynasties to history ; and from this excursion grew his subsequent researches in genealogy, to which study he contributed some authoritative work. In his old age he made a tour of Suffolk, intending to write its history. But his valuable collection of facts was transferred by him to others, the task promising to be more exacting than at first supposed, and he being well in years. He ended a hale and active old age at the age of ninety-one, his wife dying a few months before him, aged eighty-five. An account of him, as well as of his children William and Matilda, is to be found in the "Dictionary of National Biography." It was the house by the green of Stonham Aspell, referred to at the beginning, that saw most of his married partnership, and in regard to which, and the environment of Matilda Betham in her youth, the following excerpts from her notes, are given in conclusion to this preface.

"It put my father," she writes, "to much expense to make the land that was attached profitable, and the house comfortable, and to indulge his wish for a garden by taking in land from a meadow behind the house, and from the Green or Common in front, planting a hedge round, in which twin poplars stood at certain distances, and when it



THE OLD TOWER ON THE CREST OF ARNSIDE FELL, OVERLOOKING THE ESTUARY OF THE KENT.

A notable seaward landmark of Beetham.

reached the water, on which white lilies floated, numbers of the sedge called Cat's-tail, beautiful in every state and season, shut out the road. Vines and apricot trees varied the white walls of what might be called our large cottage, and luxuriant ivy hid the unsightly out-houses which joined it."

Of the interior, the Diarist says: "In our quiet and unorganized household sometimes the arts were all in all—sometimes learning unlocked her abstruse stores and people talked, albeit without pedantry, as if in the house of a philosopher. Sometimes plays were read and listened to with enthusiasm, or poems, followed in succession by the criticism of admiration. . . . My father would sit at evening in the summer with a pipe in a green garden, and surrounded by his little domain, with the square vistas cut between the poplars in the quickset hedge, opening like windows without a top on the then unenclosed and beautiful green: in each of these openings some curious thorn had been engrafted, some with finer blossoms, some with much longer spines, and all with well-defined distinction. . . . We had one, or at the most 2 maid-servants, sometimes a man and a boy on account of 'the farm.' We had loads of books in my father's library, and new ones, with reviews, etc., from the book-club every month. We were heard if we carried up our lessons to my father's study, at least the boys were, but if they did not, an occasional sarcasm or prophecy of what would become of them was all the punishment."

Fourteen children grew up at Stonham, six of the eight sons entered the service of the East India

Company, the eldest and the youngest following their father's bent towards literature and research. Of the life of Matilda, the eldest of all, subsequent letters will speak.

PART II.

A HOUSE OF LETTERS.

ROOM I.

[THE letters and excerpts are given, as far as possible, exactly as they left their writers' hands—punctuation, spelling, and occasional use of blank lines and dashes. Passages of an intimate nature are omitted, and, where desirable, fictitious initials substituted for the actual names of those to whom reference is made. All comment enclosed by brackets is by the Editor. Unless otherwise stated, the letters are addressed to Matilda Betham.

Chronologic sequence, where ascertainable, has been kept, save when the interest of a particular subject or personality suggested special arrangement. Some series of letters, and some portraits, which at first it was contemplated should be used, owing to exigencies of space and other reasons have been set aside for future inclusion, should this book chance to be reprinted.]

A SON OF FIELDING'S PARSON ADAMS.

From Matilda Betham's Diary, 1794.

"ONE day at Stonham, just as we were all seated for a meal, two old gentlemen passed the window,

one habited in black, and both with large hats and wiggs. I went to the door, and the one in black who had the appearance of a gentleman, asked me in an embarrassed voice, hesitating, if my Father was at home. I know not how, but seeing a roll of yellow paper in one hand, and construing his impediment into rage, I took him to be a lawyer. I told him my Father was in London. He said, 'O, well, that makes no difference, my business is,—my business is—,' repeated he, and suddenly spreading out his arms, appeared to aim at me with the something in his hand. (The maid, who was in the foreyard, has since told me his foot slipped on the stone at the door.) Frighted, I darted back, and frightened them all within; they rose up. The man with the gentleman then asked to speak with my Mother. I called her, and she, seeing the old gentleman with the impediment, exclaimed, 'It is Mr. Young.' This made me feel more awkward than ever. I fancied he had seen my fright. However he cleared up all by showing my Mother a Letter from Lady Dysart to him, in which she desired to be a subscriber to my Father's book; and, drinking a glass of wine, he went away again, saying he should be glad to see my Father; so I was in hopes he was not very much offended."

(A week later.) "My Father wished me to walk as far as Pettaugh to thank Mr. Young. We were received by Mr. Young and his sister. He began with his usual contortions to tell my father, that the poor of that place were very numerous & plundering, they had broke open his coalhouse, stole wood, &c., &c. that at the top of the house there was a room much infested with mice!—it was very surprizing

there was a large Cheese in this place, and they had eaten a large hole in it, in which he placed a needle stuck in a cork, but what was very extraordinary, they did not go to the bottom of the place they had eaten before, but began another beside it ! Thus he told us of his misfortunes, a Cagg of Porter that was spoiled, wind that shook his bed, and a story of some large flies. Then he went into another room and brought a common Prayer book of 200 years old, and another book to shew us a list of subscribers to whom the book belonged before he bought it in a large lot amongst which the most curious was Mills' list of honour, but which he was deprived of by a selection, his br^s wife coveted it from him, so he never saw it. His father (Fielding's Parson Adams) he told us was afraid he should ruin himself by purchasing books. He mentioned a Gentleman who had a most beautiful MS. of Titus Livy, one who had learnt some verses out of an Eschylus all in his father's handwriting, which several people told him was in being, but he had never seen it. He said Mr. Fielding the Poet had had it. Then we went with him into a room where he shewed us several old mezzotints of W^m & Mary, Vandyke, &c. He went on talking in an eccentric stile till we came away, when after several times that we had begun to wish him good day, he commenced another course."

[Lady Jerningham and her daughter, Lady Bedingfeld—those two engaging Englishwomen—do not need any introduction to readers interested in social England of a hundred years ago.]

From Lady Jerningham to Matilda Betham.

"COSSEY PARK, *September*

"26th, 1794.

"I am very sorry My Dear Miss Betham that we have not any Almanacks of the date you are in want of: nor do I know at present how they Could be procured as there is so Little possibility of communicating with Germany or even Brussels.

"I hope that we shall very soon have the pleasure of seeing You & Your Father at Cossey for now that you have begun doing us that favor it is a visit that I shall not dispense with.

"Pray give my best compliments to Mr. Betham. My daughter presents the same to you. Miss Dillon is with her aunt at Bodney. I remain, My dear Miss Betham, with great Regard.

"ever sincerely Yours,

"FRANCES JERNINGHAM.

"the week that begins with the 6th of October we are engaged but every other is free."

[Charlotte Jerningham was a few years older than Matilda Betham: in 1794 the latter was 18. They entered into a friendship that had its roots in the verities, for they were of opposite creeds, and unequal in social rank. The quaintness of the following incident justifies its resuscitation here.]

In Matilda Betham's diary (1794), she noted while at Cossey, "Miss J. showed me a piece of Poetry



REV. WILLIAM BETHAM.

(The "Poplar-planter.")

From a sketch.

which was written by somebody in the wood, and wished me to write an answer that we might find out who it was written by." The verses now given were the verses that, after being transcribed by a maid of fidelity, Betty Beck, so that the handwriting should confess nothing, were affixed by the two girls in the rustic spot favoured by the unknown swain, signing himself "Benedict." They are preserved in a note-book, under heading,

AN ANSWER TO SOME LINES IN COSSEY PARK,

1 Nov. 1794.

"Fly Benedict! and in this dangerous way,
No more, allur'd by thy ill genius stray.
Some ærial sprite that haunts the peaceful vale
Or pitying fairy sent the gentle gale
To warn thee; and deceit thou need'st not fear,
For know no evil spirit harbours here!
Yet, lest too curious thou shouldst fondly pry
And search thyself to know what danger's nigh,
A friend who trembles for thy soul's repose,
The punishment awaiting will disclose.
Then hear in silence what must be thy fate,
And save thyself from madness ere too late.
No more expect to taste the bliss of ease!
No more expect to meet with aught to please!
No more to feel the glow of pure delight!
No more to sink in quiet sleep at night!
No more to walk erect with thoughtless mien,
Or with the lively bloom of health be seen—
But slow and silent, with dejected air,
Thy breast a prey to anguish and despair,
With folded arms, sunk head, and fruitless sighs,
All lustre faded from thy languid eyes,
To seek, devoid of hope the midnight gloom
And ruminate upon thy wretched doom:
Boast, though rejected, of a lover's name,
And fondly cherish the destroying flame,

Say, will this pay thee for thy vows forsworn
 For letting Sylvia in secret mourn ?
 Ah no ! Then fly with speed this fatal place,
 And to thy injured Sylvia kneel for grace !
 For thy once erring pardon then implore,
 And ramble in these magic walks no more !”

[The following letter was penned four days before its writer's marriage to Sir Richard Bedingfeld, of Oxburgh, in Norfolk ; the surname so soon to be exchanged is humorously emphasized.]

From Miss Jerningham.

“I congratulate with you my dear Girl on the Safe arrival of Your new little relative and am happy to hear Mrs. Betham is so well. pray make her my Comp^{ts} on the Occasion.

“the papers are all to be Signed on Monday next, and on tuesday I go to Church for the first time, and then set forth for Norfolk.—I feel very very ——— I don't know how ! pray think of me. I have not forgot the lock of Raven hair You were so good as to ask for. You shall have it.

“My *travelling* gown is just brought home, it is plain fine Muslin trimmed with lace, made quite *à la greque* and tied round the Waist with a thick white Cotton rope, with large tassels like Mr. Chamberlayne's Surplice. Farewell. Most Sincerely and faithfully Yours,

“CHARLOTTE JERNINGHAM.

“FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

“In a great hurry of spirits—half mad.”

[“I have not forgot the lock of Raven hair you

asked for."—Matilda Betham was fair: she had "blue, penetrating eyes and a mobile mouth."]

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"OXBURGH, Aug. 12th, 1795

"DEAREST MISS BETHAM,—I have really begun several Letters to you, but something has always come across to prevent my finishing them. I am just returned from Cossey where I passed a month inhabiting the Great and little red room. many things came to pass while I was there that you would give your ears to hear but I shall not say a word till we meet. do you remember a Young Lady to whom I used to write such strange Letters? (I read you one) the Duchess of Chatillon. well she is now at Cossey on her way here. as She does not speak English nor you french I will not have you meet, for I could not enjoy either. when the Duchess directs her steps towards London, I shall claim your promise and muster up all the many things I have to tell you. I love to read your Letters so let me have them whenever you feel inclined to write. I have been a perfectly idle wretch ever since the 16 june. the first month it was quite wilfully. I passed it like Adam, staring at and giving names to the new created world of creatures about me.

"Sir R. desires his best Compts. I like him tolerably well. Betty arrives this day with another Speed, a strange dog Exactly like the other in mind and feature who threw himself on my protection, and for the Deceased's sake, I have adopted him, and call

him Speed. adieu my dearest Girl most sincerely
and affectionately yrs

“CHARLOTTE BEDINGFELD.”

[“Oxburgh Hall is one of the most interesting family seats in Norfolk. The manor formerly belonging to Torchil the Dane, and is now, together with the Hall, the property of the Bedingfelds, originally a Suffolk family, to whom the house and lands came about the middle of the fifteenth century, through the marriage of Margaret Tuddenham to Sir Edward Bedingfeld. The Hall also dates from the 15th century, and is a castellated brick quadrangle with towers 80 feet high. It is surrounded by a moat, and has a fine old gateway. There is a considerable collection of curious tapestry and oil paintings. Henry VII. paid a visit to Oxburgh Hall, and the room and bed where he slept are still shown. The bed is one of those massive encumbrances necessary to the dignity of our ancestors.”—*Illustrated London News*, Dec. 10, 1898.]

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“I have received my Saffron Robe, My dear Matilda, and thank you a thousand times for the trouble you have been at about it. for a *Literary Lady* you Understood the Commission very tolerably.

“You do not say exactly when you can come, so I must tell you when I go.—the End of July, I set forth with Sir Rich^d on a tour to the North, therefore between that time and this, the Space is so Short that I am almost tempted to put off the

pleasure of Seeing you till after my return which will be about the beginning of September, because You must know that when once You do Come I shall not let you go in a hurry. however if You cannot come then, come now, for see You I must.

"pray have you seen Mr. Spencer's translation of *Leonora*, from the German, with drawings by Lady D. Beauclerc? it is worth reading from the wild Singularity of the Story, and the prints are very good. my Br Edward sent it me as a present and I am so much pleased with it that I am learning it off by Heart.

"My little Girl has 4 teeth almost thro' the Gum, is it not very early, she is but just ten weeks old? if it was a Boy, I should fear it was prognostic of future turbulence, like Richard the third.

"You never will give me Your direction in London so I must again send this to Your Summer haunts, where I imagine You will Soon be.

"I am writing in the East turret of my Old Castle, the room is paved with Stone, with gothic Windows and Chimney. on one side is a door leading to an almost dark Cell, in the Brick floor of Which is a trap door, and beneath it a Curious hiding place made use of in the Civil Wars.

"every day attaches me more to these Old Walls and their Master. you must come and See if I speak truth, besides I am Sure Your Muse "would plume her ruffled Wing" in this Gothic Mansion, and produce Something extraordinary. adieu, adieu, answer me as soon as you can.

"C. B."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“COSSEY from the *Little Red Room*.

“If there is no Spell or wicked Enchantment to prevent our ever meeting again, come to me now, I mean to Oxburgh, where I return tomorrow. Let me for Heavens sake have a long visit from You. my Patience is worn out.

“I have been travelling about 800 Miles. I have seen such Hills and Dales! Rocks and Mountains! as would warm the Coldest Heart. Will You not come and hear me talk of these Things? for to whom can I talk with So much fellow feeling as to You.

“adieu, write to me immediately and tell me on which Side You will make Your approach. Swaffham is 7 miles from Us, Brandon 10, Walton as much. we could send to any of these places.

“Yours affectly

“C. BEDINGFELD.”

From Matilda Betham's Diaries, 1794-6.

In 1794 the Diarist paid a visit to town, staying at her uncle Edward's three-gabled house in Chancery Lane. She arrived at a time of popular excitement, for she writes:—

“News of Lord Howe's victory was told, and there were illuminations 3 nights running, and every person busy at them.”

1795-6. “Mr. Robinson & his d^r L'y Abergav'ny have given me an invitation to Sion House when I next go to Town. . . . My brother Charles I hear is very fair & Handsome. He sent us all

some of the Halfpence now prohibited. . . .
Have been teaching Miss C. to make bread.
. . . . Yesterday I began to copy my drawing
of Patrick from Sydney's arcadia, in oil colours."

[In London.] "My father dined with the Bp. of Rochester, & he asked my father to carry me one day when he dined with him, he said he would, but I know not how, we have always been too busy though I have a great desire to see this defender of Orthodoxy. . . . My father brought me a letter from Lady Bedingsfeld telling me of a ring with her hair in it which she had left with her mother. Next morning I call'd on Lady Jerningham for the ring which she gave me & invited me earnestly to Cossey this summer. . . . On Monday Mr. Saxon came and drew Nancy's head. We went to Mr. Opie's who took us up into his Painting room & talked about this & the other till dinner time. We drank tea with Mr. Opie. He read us a good deal of Voltaire. . . . Nancy told me Saxon had said I was very much improved in my painting, and that if I sent a picture Mr. Opie would get it into the exhibition : that between them they would correct any glaring fault there might be in it before it went."

[In 1796 the young author went to Cambridge to take Italian lessons from Signor Agostino Isola, "a delightful old man, who had been the preceptor of Gray the poet, of Pitt, and others." She lodged in the house of a bookseller, a Mr. Wallis, an old-fashioned soul, whose habit was "to sit up smoking his pipe till at 12 punctually the maid brought his

candle-stick and a pitcher of water to put out the fire.”]

[Cambridge, 1796.] “On Saturday I finished Patty’s picture and began to sketch one from the song of ‘It’s a cold rainy night,’ &c., which I discontinued. I had retired to my bedroom with a book, I think it was Cecilia, and laid my head on the bed,* when I heard somebody knock at the next door which was my painting room. I started up for I never liked anybody to go into that room, afraid they should put my things in disorder, and called out to know who it was, but having no answer, I ran out, and found a gownsman just entering with his cap off, but whom I did not in the least know. He told me that Miss Wallis who was confined to the sofa with a sprain had told him I was upstairs painting, and that he had taken the liberty of coming up. It was Mr. G—— of whom I had heard the Wallises speak. I showed him the paintings I had there, namely Mary Collinson, and the unfinished ones.” [The acquaintance thus began ran through a series of episodes. A record of one conversation was, “We talked a good deal about nothing, chiefly I believe about our idleness.” The lecture-shunning undergraduate may be left by these excerpts “getting on Milton’s mulberry tree and giving us some mulberries.”]

“One evening I was drinking tea with the Isolas when there was a rap at the door, & it being

* Her habit, when staying in strange houses where deprived of the solitude and seclusion of Stonham. This practice of “rumpling her bed” was sometimes perturbing to conventional housewifery.—ED.

opened we heard a boy say he had got a letter for Miss Betham. I opened it, and it ran, 'One waits you at the Rose;' it was in Lady Bedingfeld's handwriting. Mr. Isola went with me to the Rose Inn, and enquiring for Lady B.'s room they showed us to the door, where he left me, but when I entered there was nobody. I waited impatiently some minutes, when, the door opening, some gentlemen were coming in, but seeing me, begged pardon, talked of a mistake, & were going back, but Sir R. who was one of them called out 'Miss Betham!' and they all came in. It consisted of him, Lady B., her b^r Edw^d, Mrs. Wright, the husband of one of the Miss Havers, & a Mr. Dillon. We got tea; they rallied me upon being in Cambridge &c. & after that the gentlemen went to cards, Lady B. & myself upstairs where we talked of all that had happened since we parted. Next day young Isola showed us about Cambridge, and led me across the top of King's Chapel. We met young Thackeray & Sir R. knew him. When we had seen the chief things we returned, eat some beef, and they went off, it being settled how I should go. Lady B. & Mrs. Wright in one chariot & Sir Ric^d, Msrs J. & D. in the other. Lady B. had a scarlet Spencer, and I thought it the prettiest I had seen."

Of her visit to Oxburgh, the Diarist wrote, "I read Leonora here. . . . Sir W^m. Jerningham came on a visit & took me to Stoke Ball. A Mr. Fountaine was Steward of the Ball, and with his sister went & returned with our party. I promised to go to Lady B.'s again at Christmas."

ROOM II.

1797-98.

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“ March, 1797.

“ My drawings shall Depart to-morrow for London. I shall pack them Up with a trembling Hand. how go on Your Poems?—write, write to me, I love Your Letters. Surely I give you example enough of Incoherence in the Epistolary way to put You at Your Ease on that head.

“ I continue well, and happy ; Sometimes I am frightened about feeling so happy—but enough for the present. receive every kind wish that the Sincerest friendship can dictate.

“ C. G. B.”

[Sir Joshua Reynolds, on seeing some of Lady Bedingfeld's early sketches had remarked, “ This child should be brought up an artist.”]

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“ Your letter, With the Picture, was brought me just as I was getting into the chaise to go to Bury Fair. The miniature has double Value from being not only like You, but done with Your own hand. I am surprised with Your talent, and feel really

envious of Your Universality. You have not however caught one Expression of Your Countenance, that is a particular look of Benevolence. pray mind this another time, I think you will obviate it by making the corner of the Eye less Sharp.

"Many thanks for the trouble you have been at about Shields. we are now fixed, and some have been done for Cossey with great Success. tell me who that Old Hall belongs to, and by Whom inhabited. Holbein's pictures have generally a blue or green ground. they sell in the Shops powder Gold mixed up in Shells to be used with gum water, but I never found it answered, that is to Say it was no longer gold when put upon paper but a Sort of Dull Dirty Brown.

"When may I hope to see you again? Some of Your painting Aparatus still occupies the Corner of the great Room, and I feel a dislike to removing it.

"Miss N——'s marriage stands where it did. Sir O. between ourselves is not the wisest among men, and Does not mend matters by being a bit of a Coxcomb. she however will never find it out, and as he is good-natured they will Jog on well enough.

"C. B.

"I have been staying 2 days at Kimberley. Lord Wodehouse is delightful. Miss W. puts life into every thing. I never saw so equal a temper and a sort of Originality of imagination that is very pleasing."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"May 27, 1797.

"I meant to Surprise You with a Visit and therefore did not write, but I was prevented by an

increase of Sufferings in My Poor Aunt at Bodney, and finally by her Death. She expired on Tuesday last with that Courage and Fortitude which had marked her during her long and painful Illness. tho' She had secluded herself from the World at the Early age of 19, she retained a strong affection for those friends and Relations who remained in it, and the misfortunes of France having thrown her back (tho' Unwillingly) to her native Land, gave me an Opportunity of Cultivating an acquaintance which I shall regret the Loss of, as long as my Heart is susceptible of Gratitude. Never did I leave her peaceful cell without feeling myself happier than when I entered it. but let me Lament her Loss no longer. She was goodness! Meekness! Piety! itself, and is gone to receive her reward."

From Lady Bedingsfeld.

"WEDNESDAY EVEN, 7th June.

"I am glad my Philippic had effect. it was merely the scolding of Disappointment. You to tell me Continually of Letters written and flung away, and me not to say a Word! it is just like a Hungry traveller in an Inn expecting his Dinner, and the Landlord comes and tells him, 'Sir, I had a fine Leg of Mutton but it was over roasted and I flung it in the Fire. There was a large Pigeon Pye but it was too much Seasoned so I gave it to the Dogs. the Beef Steaks were ready dished but they were too fat so I flung them out of the Window, and as for this fried Bacon I now bring I do not think I can let you eat it for I think it is cut too thick. &c. &c. &c.' Would not the traveller knock Such

a Man down? So must I You, if You keep me Starving upon apologies: I won't have any more I tell you!

"I want to have an hour or two's Conversation with You. Where shall we meet? I wish it could be on the top of a Tree like two Birds, or on a Post Horse's Ear like two Flies. is Ipswich on this Side of Stonham or further on? if the first we may meet there, if Not tell me some Inn between your House and Bury where we could find tolerable accomodations, and a Sociable Supper or Dinner. we mean, if Nothing occurs, to set forth on Monday next for Bury where I shall stay 2 or 3 Days and then proceed as far *Stonhamwards* as may be necessary to find you: let me know immediately Where we are to go, if You think I shall not have time to receive Your Letter direct it to the *one Bell Inn Bury*.

"Our neighbour M^{rs} T—— has been at Bath about a month for her Health, she had a *Lace Night Cap* made in case she should be Obligated to call in a Doctor to her assistance, dear me! where does Vanity sometimes creep to!

"Sir Rich^d is playing back Gammon with his Chaplain, while I sit at the Window listening to the Cawing of the Rooks. is not this the true country Dullness according to the Gay World? Such a Life as 'Kings might Envy,' tho' Miss Dillon would weep at the thoughts of: by the by, She has been presented at Court, has powdered hair &c. &c. and is launched into the Fashionable World. one of my Acquaintance set off the other night from a ball for Gretna Green with an Irish adventurer. She is sister to the Young Woman who used to write

me such long dolorous Letters. I dare say You will soon see an account of it in the Papers. the Noble Marquis their Father is sorely Wounded with this Event. I mean his Pride. adieu.

“C. BEDINGFELD.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“June 1797.

“It is very Strange that Wishing so much as I do to See You, I should never be able to accomplish it. I have now to tell You that we are prevented going to Bury, and Unless You can Visit Oxburgh I know not when we shall meet. I regret all these Weeks and Months that Slip by, Without a prospect of enjoying Your Society, and some day I may hear You are going to be Married into Some distant County and then adieu to all this bright Dream of Friendship. I have now had a house of my Own 2 Years and a Day, and You have spent but one week in it!!!!—does Mr. Betham never leave home but upon Business, could Nothing bring him to our Old Towers? I hope I need not Say how happy we Should be to See him or any other of Your Family, therefore take this Matter into Consideration and let me know When You can in Comfort leave home.

“I was this Morning at Bodney for the first time Since My Poor Aunt’s Death, after my Visit I sent my Carriage on under pretence of walking Some part of the Way, but in reality to look for her Grave in the Neighbouring Church Yard; do You remember the Church? it stands in a ruinous State on a hill not far from the Convent, the ascent to it is very Steep, the Earth having been formerly Cut away into Pits. a

few Scattered trees Shade the Base of the Mount and one Solitary Cottage the sole remaining of the Village Stands near the top. I directed my Steps to the North Side of the Church where the Earth newly Sodded up immediately Showed me the Place where the Cold remains of this revered Relation lie, —4 Nuns have died Since their arrival at Bodney. they are buried in a Row, a piece of Wood over Each with the Initials of their Name, and O—B—S, R—I—P—that is, of the holy order of S^t Benedict, Requiescant in Pace.—I could have Stood for hours musing over these simple memorials of those who were born to Riches and Grandeur, but who preferred a Life of Meek Retirement, and now Sleep in peace under the Green Sod surrounded by lowly Peasants. —“how the rank Grass waves o'er the Chearless Ground.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“FRIDAY NIGHT, 8 O'CLOCK.

“I am neither Stoic, nor Philosopher, and must have reasons given me when I am disappointed of a Pleasure I counted on so much as your coming. are you bewitched? are you afraid of Papists? are You in Love?

“I came here [probably Yarmouth :—ED.] on the Day appointed, and half an hour after my arrival, another Coach and Chaise Emptied themselves into the Hall of the following persons. Mrs. Dillon (the Widow of my Unfortunate Uncle), her Son and Daughter by a former husband, and another Young Girl, a Cousin, her little fanny from Bodney, with little Betsy her Companion, and an Old Worthy

Governess upon the footing of Mrs. Reilly. these with a Negro femme de chambre, and Several Men servants of the Same Colour fill the House Completely.

"Sir Rich^d is Still in London, to my Desolation. Dashwood is Starting all sorts of Objections to delay paying the Money. I hope however all will be terminated by next Monday.

"I feel more Strange here than the Old transplanted Pollard that was brought with Such difficulty before the Windows at Oxburgh. I have been so used to quiet Happiness that I know her no longer when she appears in Crowds, and tho' the Circle here is mostly composed of Relations, Still they are hardly Acquaintances, and then Sir R. is absent. he is gone, and I am more alone than if I were in a Desert. I have written to him 4 times since we parted, and expect to receive his 4th Letter tomorrow morning.

"good night, dear Matilda. we have a Complete Lady Barbarina here in the Person of Mdle Perpignan Mrs. Dillon's Cousin.

"C. B.

"Write again quickly."

From the same.

"OXBURGH, SUNDAY,

"Dec. 2nd 1798.

"When I think of the Blessings of the Post, and how our most Secret thoughts are silently conveyed from our Closets to the Ears of our absent friends methinks we should always be writing. Wherefore then that Mental Palsy, that makes us rather run the risk of appearing ungrateful, than take the

trouble of mending a Pen, or fetching an Inkhorn?—I am more than ever persuaded that we have two Souls, and the perpetual Contradiction we experience in ourselves and others, proceed from their Clashing together.

“I am glad You are going on with Your *Worthies* and am sorry my scanty Lore can afford no help. [“A Dictionary of Celebrated Women.”—ED.]—My Book sleeps, but I have moments of Enthusiasm upon the Subject, more wild than Ever, I have begun the *Family under the Canopy*, and if You were but here, I should go on. I don’t like the account of Your health. Remember Your allegory, and take to Your Legs. Cannot You Versify as You Walk? You would then lose no time.—No Novels—no tea—air, Exercise, no Night Watchings, but as much dissipation as comes in Your Way. I have been drying up my brain with reading *Boetius*, can You tell me if there is any other translator of this Work, than L^d Preston? for tho’ the Matter is so good, the Stile is so heavy that it almost distroys me.—my Drawings are Coming back.—Richter does not approve of the Cottage Scenes, as representing nothing but Misery without Incident, but says, ‘if Yr L^p is not quite indifferent to fame you will immediately determine upon publishing the *Poor Soldier*’—I know not what to say to it. the price will be 60 Guineas, a Considerable Sum till I know the Adventures of my ‘Lost Child.’ [A picture reproduced by a print.—ED]. besides I must take the trouble of drawing it over again, for except the figure of the Soldier it is negligently done even in my Eyes.

“The Miss Sulyards, Miss Huddleston, and Miss

Wodehouse Surround 'my Coffee pot, all agreeable in different Ways. I have had the B——s, man and wife, now reconciled, but I believe Marriages mend as China Plates do, with much trouble and in general with little Success.—we are to Visit them in about a Month.

“Success to those that are far away. The Song you mentioned was composed by Miss Alderson now Mrs. Opie. She has another in the Same Strain. ‘My Love to War is going,’ &c. &c. Whenever You hear of Charles [a brother of M. B.’s who had gone to India.—ED.] remember to tell me. I am much interested about him.

“Mr. Smythe and Cary are gone, one to War the other to Study. Ned also is in London, and George restored to health and his regiment. Mine are well, therefore what signifies my Cold and my heart ach?”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“Don’t you know I had rather walk in some tangled Forest than in a box-edged Gravel Walk, therefore I should much prefer in a letter from a Friend the wildest ravings of Imagination to bridled up Sentiments. fye upon it! write to me Soon. Yours most affectionately Without either Grammar or Rhetoric,

“C. B.

“I have not received the *Proof*. I have two small drawings nearly finished. I shall send them to Stephensons.”

ROOM III.

1798.

From Lady Rouse Boughton.

“RAMSGATE,

“*October Twenty Second, 1798.*

“MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,

“I should have written to you immediately had Sir Charles had the Book you wished him to lend you but really at this Place one's time is so fully occupied in doing nothing as not to leave a vacant half hour to write Letters—on Saturday, in addition to the routine of amusements the officers of the West York gave a splendid Ball and Supper which as I was pre-engaged to dine at Margate with Sir Horace Mason at Six o Clock made no small hurry to me to get back to Ramsgate to carry Louisa to the Ball at nine where she danced every Dance & got up perfectly well to go to Church yesterday morning so I think I may pronounce her perfectly recovered.

“Why don't you write something on quizzing? It is become so general that in a short time an assembly of well meaning People will be reduced to a Meeting of Mutes from this same fear of being

quizzed : two or three Days ago a Lady who sang very well was afraid to comply with the wishes of the the Company to do so because she said it would only create a Quiz & I have been much more than half afraid to refuse playing Cards upon a Sunday (although a rule I have always adhered to) for fear of being Quizzed.—a very pleasant & sensible Friend of ours L^d Lilford asked the other Day if he might go to Sleep when he was *quizzed*, but as it does not often act as a soporific upon Peoples feelings I own I shall rejoice to see this fashionable habit laid aside or at least corrected that all Society may not be reduced to merely the *Satirists* & the *Satirized*.—We have changed our Lodgings to No. 4 Chapel Place as a much less exposed Situation in this blowing Weather, where I shall hope very soon to hear from you, & remain, Yours very sincerely,

“CATH. ROUSE BOUGHTON.

“Sir Charles & Louisa
unite in best wishes.”

[“Sir Charles Rouse Boughton was the son of Lord Lyttleton’s Delia, (‘Greville, whose eyes have power to make

A *Pope* of every swain!’)

To her Pope left his two-handled silver cup. I have often drank wine, with that infusion of herbs in it which formed Pope’s customary beverage. A sister of Sir Charles’ was Lady Templetown, from whose classical cuttings on paper Wedgwood’s ornamental china was frequently embellished.” From Matilda Betham’s notes.]

From Matilda Betham's Notes.

"This little continuation of some verses I had met with I repeated to her (Lady Boughton) and afterwards wrote them out at her request. The lines to which the reply was made, were,

" "Since 'tis superior skill in arts refin'd,
That ranks the male above the female kind ;
Ye fair, each meaner vanity controul,
And study how to ornament the soul !
By learning's polish let it be your plan,
In dignity of mind to equal man !
For selfish men monopolize the parts,
In arms, in trade, in government, in arts !
In arms, as strongest, doubtless 'tis their due ;
Perhaps in trade, as ablest to pursue," etc.

I continued,

Ye men, we willingly yield these to you.
We wish not the mechanic arts to scan,
But leave the slavish work to selfish man !
He claims alone the privilege to war,
But 'tis our smiles that must reward the scar !
We need not these heroic dangers brave,
Who hold the laurell'd conqueror a slave.
We need not search the world for sordid gain,
While we its proud possessors can enchain.
When their pursuit is only meant to prove,
How much they'd venture to deserve our love ;
For wealth and honours they can only prize,
As making them more worthy in our eyes.
Their insufficiency they would supply,
And to these glittering resources fly !
Let the poor boasters then indulge their pride,
And think they o'er the universe preside ;
Let them recount their numerous triumphs o'er,
And tell the tales, so often told before ;

Their own much-doubted merit to enhance;
And gain the great reward—a favouring glance!
Let them, in bondage, fancy themselves free;
And while fast fetter'd, vaunt their liberty!
Because they do not massy chains behold,
Suppose that they are monarchs uncontroul'd.
How vain! to hope 'twould be to them reveal'd!
The flame burns strongest that is most conceal'd!
Then with what potent, what resistless art,
Those hidden bonds are twin'd about the heart,
So that the captive wanders unconfin'd,
And has no sovereign but o'er his mind!
The prize is mutual, either power or fame;
We have the substance, *they* may keep the name!

While the ink was drying, I left the room for a few minutes; and, on my return, though nobody but herself was present, found these lines underneath, written by Sir Charles:

'True! ours is idle, empty boast;
For ladies always rule the roast.
Our claims are high, but power ideal;
Yours irresistible, and real.'"



EDWARD BETHAM.

A Grandson.

From an unfinished sketch.



ROOM IV.

1798-1799.

From Lady Bedingfeld.

1798.

"let us be on a free footing together in all respects, no true friendship exists long without.

"I tell You for the 1000th time that You are full of Genius, several paths to fame are open before you, and if You don't contrive to march there thro' one of them, you deserve to have your *mental feet* cut off."

From Lady Boughton.

"CORNEY HOUSE, CHISWICK,

"Aug. 16th

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,

"I was from home when I received your Letter, upon a Visit, where our whole Mornings were passed in driving about and calling upon my old acquaintance, and all the Evenings occupied at the Card Table, so that the hours I stole for writing even to Sir Charles were such as should have been passed in Sleep—this lasted for five Weeks, & I returned through Cheltenham where I was tempted to stay two more, as Sir Charles came there to meet me & drank the

Waters. We left it on Saturday and arrived here but yesterday, where I had determined the very first use I made of a Pen should be to write to you.

"During the Time Mrs. Siddons performed at Cheltenham I saw her every night in very great Perfection & William was generally of the party, but one night when there was a little demur about his going he told his Papa he thought he was got into a long Lane of Pleasure from which there was no turning & so carried his Point. he was quite captivated. the time approaches for his return to school.

"I shall much like to hear what Scenes have struck you, what Books you have read & can recommend to me.

"Your very Sincere Friend,

"CATH. R. B.

"Sir Charles desires
his Compliments."

From Lady Boughton.

"Dec. 19th 1798.

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,

"I am taking down the chintz Bed which will give me two Rooms opening almost out of each other to accommodate Authors, talkers, Readers, Workers, Sleepers, & occasional Players, but alas the charms & Dissipation of London during these Winter Months are such as to preclude my hoping to get many Performers in those different occupations, but I do now promise myself the speedy acquisition of your Company, & on your Arrival shall take down another Bed & dedicate a little Room upstairs to

Painting & *Messing*, in which last I hope to play a distinguished Part. What has made me more eagerly tease you about coming soon is that when Parliament meets again after the Recess Sir Charles talks of taking Lodgings in Town where of course our Dimensions will be much smaller & our Time differently & less pleasantly occupied than in the Social Converse of our own little Domestic Circle, but of this there is nothing absolutely fixed. William is come home for the Holidays we think much improved. He has betrayed himself as a party concerned in poetry by the following Lines upon one of the Ushers who takes Tobacco,

‘Out comes the baccy box
Off flies the lid
In go his fingers
And pull out a quid.’

“Adieu, with the united good Wishes of this Family, Believe me, Yours very Sincerely,

“CATH. ROUSE BOUGHTON.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“Jan. 3rd 1799.

“I did not write because I have been long about the Commission You gave me, not however with any Success as yet. Those Books are not in this Library. I have applied to Ned, and he has promised to try and borrow some of them for me. He does not know what is going on.—among Your Ladies have You anything about Dame *Julyan Berners*? if not I can assist You a little.

“Miss Dillon is not yet Married, they have only

just begun the Settlements. Lord D. is in London with his wife.

"I was thinking the other day that You are the only one of my friends that is not in Love.—You do well, for I can add not one of my friends are likely to Succeed so justly is it said that the "Course of true Love never does run smooth!"—

"What a Man have I seen lately for those whose hearts are not engaged, even dangerous for those who are.—Heaven keep him out of Your Sight. adieu.

"C. B."

From the Same.

"January, 1799.

"May this and every succeeding Year be happy ones to You and all Your Family. pray let me know how Old George is and if he is pretty.

"of *Dame Julian* I know little more than you.

"Julyan, d. of Sir James B. of Berners Roding in Essex. she was chief of the Convent of Sopewell in Herts, where she presided over 12 Nuns of the Benedictine order. being of a Noble House she was allowed the title of Dame, and Biographers consent that she was a Woman of Majestic *Beauty* and heroic Spirit ("Dallaway's Inquiries").

"Julian Berners, a Gentlewoman endowed with excellent gifts both of Body and Mind, wrote certain treatises of Hawking and hunting, delighting herself in those exercises and pastimes. She also wrote a Book of the Law of Arms and knowledge pertaining to Heralds (Holinshed, "Chron." p. 1355).

"*the Boke of St. Albans*" is now extremely Scarce. Dr. John Moone, Bishop of Norwich had it in his Collection, and another at Cambridge. it had its name from the Monastery

of St. Albans, where it was printed (1495) soon after the Introduction of the Typographic art into this kingdom. it treats of Hawking in prose under several hds. of hunting in a Poem of 606 Lines &c. &c.

SPECIMEN OF THE POETRY.

PROVERBES.

“Who that buildeth his house all of salowes,
And pricketh a blind horse over the fallowes,
And suffrith his wife to seek many halowys,
God send him the bliss of everlasting galowis.”

“of her Life as a Nun, I hope to give you further intelligence. I know nothing of an Earlier Authoress, but will inquire.

“farewell,
“C. B.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“*March, 1799.*

“What in the World are you doing at Chiswick?

.

“Now my dr Matilda, you think I am in high Spirits, but if you knew all I felt in this moment I am sure you would Pity me. I am quite wretched about my little Girls, not that I apprehend any are doing ill, God be praised the danger is over, but it distresses me beyond expression to see them suffer so much, and their moaning and Complaining pierces me to the Heart.

“I am sorry about the translation, is it the price You ask that stops them? or is the sort of thing not

in request? pray go on with your Novel. nothing goes down the Public throat like that sort of writing—any stuff will do, and small profits do to build upon.

“We are all in alarms about the french, the names, and ages of every man woman and child taken down, as well as the number of Carts, horses, &c: &c. will the Storm only lower at a distance or are we really to see it flash in our Eyes? I, who have been within sight of an Action, and have slept Undisturbed when the Shock of artillery has made the Windows rattle, do not feel any personal fears, as many do, but the Idea of those being Called out to real danger whose lives are dearer than our own makes me almost distracted. if the french land You may look in the list of the killed for my name as well as Sir R.s.

“C. B. THE DESPERATE.”

*From Matilda Betham to her brother, W. Betham
(afterwards Sir W. Betham).*

“STONHAM, *May 22nd 1800.*

“MY DEAREST WILLIAM,

“Before I received your letter, I had declined Lady Boughton’s invitation, for I could not so soon resolve upon leaving home, excepting duty or necessity compelled me—any thing to serve you or any part of my family I should consider under these heads—but I think as events seldom happen so soon as we imagine them in our plans, it may be yet some time before we can bring about ours—I should wish in your next to be more fully acquainted with the nature of the plan you propose

—I think nothing as employment for me would be equal to portraits for profit, and notwithstanding the multitude of professors I am determined to study every branch as much as I can, particularly miniature—I have on this idea practised since my return, and am in hopes I shall be able to send half a dozen in one frame which may not be refused admittance into Somerset House—This I shall reveal to none but you and my father—till I see if it succeed, and I have more sanguine hopes than ever that it will succeed. Should that be the case I doubt not if I was settled in town by that time I could find employment—But I think at the enormous price of every article of provision it would be a pity to start *now*, except a *very* favourable opening indeed should offer.—and we shall find if we exert all our industry we shall not be more than ready before next Christmas.—I think in this case I can forward our plans and make preparations more effectually at home than any where else—which I continue doing every opportunity I can spare from my drawing and family concerns, in which my mother requires my assistance very often. The crops too promise to be very favourable this year—and you will not have the burthen of the boys.—so that at least out of many favourable circumstances, we may contrive to collect some to answer our purpose. Your cousin William mentioned your coming down with him & Miss F. to see us—I should think it a very good thing, but it must not be till Mary is returned & if we can Susan G. & Anne gone to Gretton. However you will see my father soon. It is needless to say how happy we shall be to see you. . . . Young Armstrong, who is a very handsome young man,

I have got to sit for a miniature, it promises to be a good likeness, and if I make it a good picture as I hope & shall take great pains to do, I intend it, *entre nous* to make one of my exhibition pictures.—He I believe will soon be your neighbour—at least as near as Islington, but things are not settled yet.

“I suppose Nancy is at Bristol—you have heard from cousin William’s letter that George sailed & when my father comes &c—I have had a letter from Sir Richard B. telling me Lady B^d has added a little boy to her nursery.

“Good night—it is very late, God bless you!

“27th.

“Waller called to-night—he goes to London to-morrow or next day, so as you will have this letter sooner I shall send it by him—My father talks of setting off for town on the 17th June with Mr. Armstrong—who is to bring Mary back, and my father to escort Susan in the coach—I have had a letter from M—— Isola, who tells me she has at last persuaded Margaret to stay in Cambridge & teach. We have had a letter from George to-day to say he was sailing, & that he had not time to write to you—very happy.—We saw by the paper to-day also that he had sailed again & I hope no bad weather will drive him back again—Anne is grown very studious & reads a great deal.

“Adieu—have you heard anything of John—he has never written to us & though I have looked in the papers I have seen nothing about his ship—We are all well again—good-night.”

[The cousins mentioned in the foregoing letter were some of the children of Edward Beetham, the Poplar-planter's elder brother. Edward had two sons, William and Charles, and three daughters, Jane, Harriet, and Cecilia.

William Beetham, the eldest son, was a man of intellectual attainment and wide sympathies. He filled various public appointments, was a Fellow of the Royal Society and the Linnæan Society, and a Deputy-Lieutenant for Middlesex. His son, Albert William Beetham, also an F.R.S., held varied interests in life. He was one of the last of the original "renters" of Old Drury Lane Theatre, and himself a dramatic author. For many years he held the office of Adjutant and Clerk of the Cheque of H.M. Hon. Corps of the Gentlemen-at-Arms; and, like his father, was a Deputy-Lieutenant for Middlesex. In later life he became Recorder of Dartmouth, and died in 1895 aged 94, one of the several instances of cheerful and active longevity that have marked the family.

Edward Beetham's second son, Charles, Captain of the 86th Foot, was killed at Quatre Bras on the evening of June 16th, 1815.

Jane Beetham inherited artistic faculty, and became Opie's pupil. She exhibited at the Royal Academy, being also represented at kindred Exhibitions. For some time before her marriage she painted miniatures professionally, as did her cousin Matilda. She married Mr. John Read; and their daughter Cordelia inherited from them a large fortune, which she bequeathed to the Brompton Hospital. A memorial tablet to her memory has been placed over the entrance to the new buildings

which her benefactions enabled the authorities to construct. The reproductions of the portraits of Edward Beetham and his two daughters in this book are made by courteous permission of the Hospital, to whom the originals were left by will. The will making this bequest was written out on half-a-sheet of notepaper, and found in an old Harpsichord-piano, which quaint "casket" is now preserved at the Hospital.

Old Edward Beetham himself was of a versatile and lively disposition, and at the outset of his life offended his father by joining a company of actors. He soon relinquished the stage, settled in London, and married a daughter of John Robinson, of Sedgfield, Durham, and grand-daughter of John and Elizabeth Robinson, of Forton in Lancashire, whose estate there was included in the lists of the "Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates" after the 1715 Rebellion. His daughter-in-law's religion (Roman Catholic) and her kinsmen's Stuart sympathies were displeasing to the then head of the family at Little Strickland; but at the birth of a son to the young couple a reconciliation took place over the cradle, and the child was baptized from the old home in Westmorland. Edward inherited the Little Strickland patrimony, but soon disposed of the estate. His London life was successful, and he won a considerable fortune by his patents and inventions. He was a mechanist of a practical mind, one of his useful innovations being the marriage of the cog-wheel and wood roller to the mangle, getting rid of the stone roller, which relief of vexed laundry-folk probably caused as great an increase of good temper in England as the introduction of Methodism. He



CAPTAIN CHARLES BEETHAM,
Second son of Edward Beetham.

From a miniature by Alvery.

was a Justice of the Peace for Middlesex, a prominent advocate of the development of Insurance, and became one of the Founders and Directors of the Eagle Fire Office. Strongly interested in the stage and art, he enjoyed the friendship of several well-known people of his time, among them being Opie, and his second wife the "virtuous and lovely Amelia Alderson," Henry Thomson, R.A., Foote the actor, and Bellamy the singer.

Edward Beetham's first house was near Fleet Street, then rendered picturesque, not only by its many gable ended houses ornamented with quaint carvings and stamped plaster designs, but also by the countless signs, gilt, and painted with strange devices which hung above the shop and tavern fronts. The Beetham house stood on the west side of Chancery Lane, within one house of Fleet Street, and commanding an uninterrupted view of that bustling thoroughfare. At that time Fleet Street and Chancery Lane, and their neighbourhood was the centre for booksellers, publishers, and engravers, and the residence of the literary, artistic, and legal world. In 1799 the three-gabled house, with its quaintly carved front and picturesque overhanging stories, was pulled down during the widening of Chancery Lane; Edward Beetham erected a brick house a little further back on the same site, but did not live in it, retiring to Somers Town, then a "sunny village" not yet absorbed by London. Though christened Betham, and when writing in 1765 so signing himself, he subsequently used two e's in spelling his surname. Several variations of the name are found. Latinized it was Biedun. The first few knights signed it Bethom,

or Bethun ; the later ones Betham. In the North Westmorland Registers it is Betham ; but sometimes Beethom, Beatham, or Beetham. In a map of 1802 the village is spelled Beethom ; in another of older date Beetholme ; at the present time its rendering is Beetham.]

ROOM V.

1800-1.

From Lady Bedingsfeld.

"I am returned from my Cambrian Expedition, and am much delighted with all I have seen. I really feel a sort of Tenderness for Wales which I shall ever retain. We travelled in the Curicle with our own Horses, and met with no Accident. the Groom rode my mare with a Saddle that became a Woman's by fixing a Pommel on to it. this I often did, and rode for 10 Miles almost every day. We entered Wales by Oswestry from Shropshire and so to Llangollen Conway Carnarvon Barmouth and back by Welsh Pool, Ludlow, Worcester &c. we had the Sun in Perfection but no Waterfalls.

"at Llangollen we saw a great deal of the Ladies, they talked with high praise of you which gave me Pleasure. I think Lady E.'s face is not adapted to the Life she has chosen, but she is very entertaining. I have promised to send her a drawing. she has got one for her Story of the blind Harper which she does not like. I think perhaps I could do one to Please her better, therefore tell it me over again, that I may be sure of the Circumstances. I have something in

my head that will please me if I can execute it upon paper."

[Matilda Betham had toured Wales with the Boughtons, and gained acquaintance with the "Ladies of Llangollen," whose attachment to each other, and original mode of life made them known. Byron, in a letter to Miss Pigot, dilating on a college friendship, said, "We shall put *Lady E. Butler* and *Miss Ponsonby* to the blush, *Pylades* and *Orestes* out of countenance, and want nothing but a catastrophe like *Nisus* and *Euryalus* to give *Jonathan* and *David* the 'go by.'"—ED.]

"I was much pleased with Conway, we were really quite Sorry to leave it. from Carnarvon I went up Snowdon, *in the night too*, in order to see the Sun rise ; when it burst upon the sleeping world I was well repaid for all I had suffered in the Ascent, it was a sight not to be described. Sir Rich^d (not being quite well and having been up before) staid in the Guides Hut at the foot of the Hill, while I, led by the mountaineer and followed by the Servant, spent the Still Hours of Night in climbing this Stupendous Height. I set forth at one, and reached the Summit a little after four. two hours brought me back to the Hut, which, as I viewed it lighted by the rising Sun, made me think (I know not why) of Cain's dwelling.

"I love Wales ! I wish one could spend a year or two there without being supposed to be ruined. why should so beautiful a Country from this Idea be looked upon as the Botany Bay of English Gentlemen ?

"Did you not find the Cottagers remarkably kind and Hospitable ? their Simplicity and Good Humour

struck me very much. one day as we were taking a Solitary ride among the Mountains a violent Shower came on and obliged us to take refuge in a Hut at a little distance, it was quite out of the High road, and I suppose the Inhabitants had never seen anything above a Peasant before. there was an Old Woman two Young ones and several Children. at our entrance they all came round, Smiling and Speaking Welsh, and as soon as I had seated myself they proceeded to examine my dress with high marks of Approbation. they took hold of my hands, *felt* me all about, and upon my taking my Hat off to wipe it the Old Woman got hold of my head to look at the Gold Comb stuck in my hair. then they brought us Butter, Milk, Bread and all they could think of. after some time I observed one of the Young Women who was very big with Child turning a Piece of Clean rag round and round endeavouring in vain I perceived to cut out a little Shirt, a ragged Pattern laying by her. being as you know an adept in these Matters I took her Scissors and did the Job in a moment. I then took a Silver thimble from my Pocket and put it upon her finger. the Joy and Surprise was wonderful and I regretted much not understanding a Word they said. after an hour's stay we left them but not without difficulty, for there was no end of Shaking hands, and just as I was setting off they almost pulled me off my horse by catching hold of my foot to examine my shoe which happened to have a Steel ornament upon it.

“ Adieu,

“ C. B.

“ I hope all are well at home, pray write.”

From Lady Bedingsfeld.

"MONDAY, November 17th 1800.

"I long to see You, to hear You talk without being able to rub out whole periods as You do in Your Letters, and which I never fail to hold up at the window to endeavour to read. My house has been filled with one party after another ever since my return from Wales. I am now about to profit of my liberty to visit Cossey. I go on Friday, what I want You to do is this. meet me there. I have My mother's orders to invite You. and if You will come in the Coach or as You please to Norwich I will meet You there. . . . I like to be at *Cossey this month* it reminds me of *past times* and your being with me will add doubly to the recollections my mind will be full of. adieu

"C. B.

"I have a thousand things to say to you."

From the Same.

"I hope your fears about your Brother Groundless. Mrs. St. John was Unheard of for many months, and was supposed to have been lost with her Husband & Children on their return from India. but at last they all arrived in perfect Health, the Ship had been detained for repairs.

"I shall get Amadis de Gaul—those kind of changeable (?) arms were perhaps what Heralds term *Coquirancas* such as the fetterlock &c. the Stafford family had 8 or 9. these might be chosen from some particular Circumstance.

"I give up the *Adelphi* for this year, because I have no time to draw anything new, and what I had prepared, is *not Historical* nor are the figures large Enough, according to the directions in the paper sent me. I am yet dubious if the prizes are given to persons of any age, for it does not say so and yet in all other branches of Arts or Sciences, the prize is held out to all, and therefore I should hope that painting is not more circumscribed than her Sisters.

"I have not seen Griselda but agree with you.

"I have or am reading Cowper's life with much pleasure—I have also perused and re-perused Lord Strangeford's 'de Camoens.' have you seen it? there are some little things very pretty, particularly a rondeau finishing each Stanza with 'Just like Love.' I must transcribe it—

' Just like Love is yonder rose
heavenly fragrance round it throws,
Yet tears its dewy leaves disclose,
and in the midst of Briars it grows
Just like Love.

Cull'd to bloom upon the Breast,
since rude thorns the Stem invest
they must be gathered with the rest
and with it to the heart be prest
Just like Love.

and when rude hands the twin Buds sever
they die and they shall blossom never
—Yet the thorns be sharp as ever
Just like Love.'

"in Speaking to his mistress he says, "I meet thy soft and *Shaded eye*"—is it not a new Expression?

"I have felt my ardor for reading and intellectual employment revive very much since my confinement, almost to *rarification*—when I am about, I blunt my mind by sewing and teaching, which I think it my duty to practice, but in Sickness, I indulge in my natural propensities, and become happy in an Ideal World and forgetting the one I live in."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"I have been renewing at Cossey a most heart-rending Acquaintance—My unfortunate Uncle General Arthur Dillon left one Daughter (by His first Wife, Granddaughter of L^d Falkland) who married very Young a Nobleman of large Property in France, driven from thence 3 Years ago she fled with her Husband and two infants to America where he purchased a Small Farm, *tilled it himself* while she with Angelic Patience went thro *Labors* and fatigues that I cannot even write.—disappointed here again of a Quiet retreat, they returned to Spain, and then to France, where they were allowed to remain in their Country Seat plundered as it was of every Piece of Furniture. a Late Decree drove them once more upon the Wide World, and here they are bereft of Everything with a little Boy of 7 and a Girl of a Year: these Events Speak for themselves but if You Saw the Sufferer!—She is just My age and Height. Very Slender, graceful in every Motion, her Complexion beautifully fair, not Even tarnished with Sorrow or foreign Climes. her hair very little darker than flaxen, falling in Ringlets almost all over her face.—her features more pleasing than Regular,

but so very pleasing that All Beauty must vanish before them.

“adieu, adieu

“dear Maud

“C. B.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“Nov. 1801.

“I should do exactly as You do about going to London.

“I have just heard a most Shocking piece of News from Norwich. —a Young Lady there, whom I have seen and admired for her beauty in every public Place, being in want of Money had the Audacity to forge a draft for £400 on Gurney’s Bank in Mr. S——’s name, she carried it to the Bank disguised as a Man, about 6 in the Evening, they told her to call next morning, as the accounts were made up for the Night. the next day not Chusing to venture herself, she sent an Old Woman to fetch the Money, which gave suspicion, and Mr. S. — was sent to, and the forgery discovered. Miss — braved it out for some time, but is now it is said set out for *the Indies* her family have retired from Norwich. — what think You of this, it makes me quite Shudder. nothing can save her from being Hanged if she is taken—what could She want with so large a Sum?—

“C. B.”

ROOM VI.

1802-5.

*From Samuel Taylor Coleridge, addressed,
"To Matilda Betham,
from a Stranger,
"Keswick, Sept 9, 1802. S.T.C."*

"Matilda! I have heard a sweet tune play'd
On a sweet instrument—thy Poesie—
Sent to my soul by Boughton's pleading voice,
Where friendship's zealous wish inspirited,
Deepened and fill'd the subtle tones of *taste* :
(So have I heard a Nightingale's fine notes
Blend with the murmur of a hidden stream!)
And now the fair, wild offspring of thy genius,
Those wanderers, whom thy fancy had sent forth
To seek their fortune in this motley world,
Have found a little home within *my* heart,
And brought me, as the quit-rent of their lodging,
Rose-buds, and fruit-blossoms, and pretty weeds,
And timorous laurel leaflets half-disclos'd,
Engarlanded with gadding woodbine tendrils!
A coronal, which, with undoubting hand,
I twine around the brows of patriot HOPE!

The Almighty, having first composed a Man,
Set him to music, framing Woman for him,
And fitted each to each, and made them one!
And 'tis my faith, that there's a natural bond
Between the female mind and measur'd sounds,

Nor do I know a sweeter Hope than this,
 Than this sweet Hope, by judgment unreprou'd,
 That our own Britain, our dear mother Isle,
 May boast one Maid, a poetess *indeed*,
 Great as th' impassion'd Lesbian, in sweet song,
 And O! of holier mind and happier fate.

Matilda! I dare twine *thy* vernal wreath
 Around the brows of patriot Hope! But thou
 Be wise! be bold! fulfil my auspices!
 Tho' sweet thy measures, stern must be thy thought,
 Patient thy study, watchful thy mild eye!
 Poetic feelings, like the stretching boughs
 Of mighty oaks, pay homage to the gales,
 Toss in the strong winds, drive before the gust,
 Themselves one giddy storm of fluttering leaves;
 Yet, all the while self-limited, remain
 Equally near the fix'd and solid trunk
 Of Truth and Nature in the howling storm,
 As in the calm that stills the aspen grove.
 Be bold, meek Woman! but be wisely bold!
 Fly, ostrich-like, firm land beneath thy feet,
 Yet hurried onward by thy wings of fancy
 Swift as the whirlwind, singing in their quills.
 Look round thee! look within thee! think and feel
 What nobler meed, Matilda! canst thou win,
 Than tears of gladness in a BOUGHTON's eyes,
 And exultation even in stranger's hearts?"

[This poem has only recently come to light, and was first included in Coleridge's Works by the late Mr. J. Dykes Campbell, whose is the only edition, I believe, that contains it.]

From Lady Jerningham.

"COSSEY, October 18, 1802.

.

"I am in daily expectation of a Letter from Lady Bedingfeld to announce her Return. The Last I

had was from Frankfort. She has been several times a Little out of order from the Heat of the weather, but upon the whole very much amused & entertained tho Lamenting the sad devastation brought by war and Revolution of Government. the Figure of this World Passes away! so Says St^t Paul, & never was it more truly evinced than in our days."

From Sir Charles Rouse Boughton.

"DEVONSHIRE PLACE, Dec. 22, 1803.

.

"On the subject of your agreement for the Dictionary I can say nothing without seeing the copy. ["Dict. of Celebrated Women."—ED.]

"With regard to the publication of your Second Volume of Poems, I should recommend to you to be not too much in a hurry, but to wait a few months till the Dictionary shall be known and circulated, which its own merits & the efforts of the publisher united, will certainly accomplish, and you then would either print them on your own account, or treat with a Bookseller, with a better foundation. I think, with a Subscription, the first mode might be most beneficial. But I am aware that the distant returns, &, to a woman particularly, the trouble of obtaining them, are discouraging; whereas a fixed price is an immediate (or at least a near) & positive benefit. Should you prefer the latter mode, which is certainly in many respects eligible; do not sell the Copy right, but reserve to yourself future editions. For I know a case in which a Gentleman got 50 Gs from old Dodsley for

the 2^d edition of a very trifling book. And before you go to the tribunal of the Critics, let me offer my friendly exhortation to you to revise and carefully correct every piece, as it is not now fitting for you, as an author of established pretensions, to ask indulgence for inaccuracies in poetry. Trusting you will take these sentiments in good part, I beg to subscribe myself, with Compliments to the family at Stonham,

“Your Sincere Friend,

“C. W^m ROUSE BOUGHTON.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“COSSEY, *Sunday 30th.*

.

“My time is so much taken Up with my *Olive branches* that I cannot contrive to have more than two hours in the morning for any personal Occupation. when Summer comes I shall give *my Lectures* out-doors which will be pleasanter, and save the Moments I must otherwise Steal for walking.

“I do not wish to see Nature when she puts on all her Wintry humours, but as she is My Oldest friend, the moment she Smiles I am at her feet.

.

“have you read Southey’s New Epic Poem, I have not, but I have heard a great deal of it. I have been reading some of the Plays on the *Passion* which somehow I never met with before—there are delightful passages in them.

.

"I venerate your Father for his own sake and if I was a Bishop he would soon find it out.

"I had a House full all Christmas. My Brother and his Wife were Some time with Us. her little Boy is so Stout and Strong, that one feels none of that tender interest a helpless Child inspires till one looks at his Eyes; and they are so Smiling, so gracious, so Innocent, that it is impossible not to *att.mpt* to raise his little Herculean Person to ones Heart.—adieu."

From Lady Jerningham.

.

"I think you may perhaps be glad to see the Pictures of the Celebrated Madame Le Brun (from Paris) She is Supposed to have particular merit in her Colouring, and has asked for & Received 500 & 800ff for a Portrait.

"as I am going there this morning if you are at Liberty for two oclock I will Call upon you & you must moreover resign yourself to me for the remainder of the day."

From the Same.

.

"We have a young American painter here under Gen. Money's protection. The Youth has Genius and the greatest facility for drawing likenesses. He has made his *patron* 20 years younger however than he can descend to. I am going to commit my grim visage to the care of his pencil.

"The young man is very modest, & looks to want a little *cheering*, so if he comes within the circle of

your benignity I am certain he will feel it.—America does not seem at this moment either to encourage or produce Genius equal to what under a new government might be expected to flourish.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

.

“I hope you guessed when Miss Wodehouse sat for her Picture, I insisted upon having one friend’s portrait taken by another. . . . pray do not make Yourself uneasy about Your health. You are too well made to have anything to fear for Your lungs, unless from Accident or very great Neglect. Your feelings are merely Nervous, and will wear off as you grow Older and more *Callous*. . . .

“I am reading *Hudibras* for the *first* time thro’. it is not the Sort of thing that pleases me but one ought to have read it. I am also eating Elephants and Stuffing Birds with Mr. *Vaillant* in Africa. this author inspires no kind of Interest for himself which I think is Unusual.”

From the Same.

“OXBURGH, *June 29th* 1803.

.

“On Sunday we go to Yarmouth. Fanny in the Tandem with Sir Rich^d and me, the other three follow in a few days in the chaise—we have got a Comfortable little House between the Town and the Sea, with a Garden round it which will be convenient for the little ones.—When I am going to a New place

like Yarmouth (for every season it is new by the Company) I cannot help wondering what agreeable people may perhaps be there in Store that I have not yet dreamed of.—do you feel this, it is childish, but Comfortable.—I find Zimmerman had something of the same Idea in Looking at a Map. I cannot write one word more for they are talking of the new invented Ship, and I cannot but listen.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

.
 “I feel a Want of Your Society that I cannot express. I hope I do not grow fastidious, but really I find people very tiresome, and in return they think me a Strange being——

“W. and his Wife are here. She is an Elegant little Woman, perfectly good humoured, easy *to live at peace with* and sings Charmingly, so far so good, but she cannot understand me, and I feel with Compunction, that I am but a dull Companion for her. She seems truly amiable, but still there is something more wanting to carry on the perpetual Conversations of a Country-house tête á tête.

.
 “I am reading Home’s rebellion 1745 it is an interesting Work, and cannot be read without considerable emotion.

.
 “I have been in Town for a fortnight to buy furniture for our Yarmouth Villa. My Father desired I would Sit for my picture which I did to Opie. I

believe it is like, as a picture I like it very well, the Costume was according to My Fancy, we talked (Opie and I) of You and Your cousin.

"Lady C. Goold and Mr G. are coming to live at *Langham* in Suffolk, they move at Lady Day—she is a very amiable young woman, and from early acquaintance very dear to me. Mr G. is handsome, Mild & Clever, and I do not think Lord Kenmore will ever regret his consent to their Union.

"I have been copying several of the Family pictures in the Stile of Holbein's Heads, for a Gentleman who is going to Illustrate his History of Norfolk—he is an acquaintance of this Year, a favourite, he name is Homfray. he lives at Yarmouth where he married a Miss Simons he is a Clergyman tell me if you ever heard of him."

From the Same.

"YARMOUTH, Aug 31st 1803.

.

"I hope you continue basking in the Intellectual Sunshine Your return home drew forth. Clouds must however intervene now and then, and there are moments when the Happiest feel a disgust of Every thing Within their reach—I do, at least, tho' not often.—

.

"I have given way to the Lounging Spirit of the Place, and have been Idle and amused, Conversing with what fell in my way and have found as usual more good than bad."

From the Same.

"COSSEY, *Sunday.*

.

"with the prospect of seeing You in a Chair by me I cannot write much.

"I am reading Chaucer's Life which is amusing tho', as his Life, it is spun out to an unnecessary Length, it might more properly be called Edw^d 3^{ds} age.

"Edward has sent me a Miniature of an Elderly Man, which he is commissioned to get copied, will you undertake the job? and shall I send it or keep it till we meet?"

From the Same.

"COSSEY, *Sunday evening, 12th*

.

"I wrote to You as soon as I received Your Letter but burnt it, in the Idea that it could only reach Stonham after Your departure. I have been expecting You ever since, hearing You in every blast, and seeing you in every approaching Gust, but all in vain, and now I am about to depart, as I have already told You, full of anxiety lest you should be unwell another Circumstance perplexes me, the Miniature Picture belongs to somebody who is in a great hurry for it, they tease Edward about it and he teases me: I did not send it, thinking You would have been here before this, and again today I have had a Letter from My Brother, demanding the Old Gentleman immediately. I shall leave him however in my Mother's room and beg that as soon as ever You receive this You will

write for it in case You cannot (from some unforeseen cause) leave home."

From Lady Jerningham.

"COSSEY, february 13, 1804

"I send You the old Gentleman whose face is to be Multiplied: tho perhaps if his friends Lived in Cyprus, they might rather have wished his features to have been annihilated.

.
"I beg My Compliments to your Father whom we have not had the pleasure of Seeing this Long time."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"I know something of the feelings You talk of. I am preserved from the disagreeable ones probably by being destined to travel thro' Life in a beaten road, which requires no judgment to follow, whereas you have to make Your way across the fields and thickets, no Wonder You sometimes meet with brambles, and rough paths that impede Your progress, but in return, You catch a view of delightful Glens, and Grottoes, which the quiet traveller on the King's highway little dreams of.

"I am sorry You do not quite like my Picture. I do not think the looking pensive a defect, if it does not look Stupified—perhaps it does ?

"Mr. D—— is different from what I ever saw him. he is become grave and irritable. G—— and he had some cross words at cards, but it blew over. G—— made me some fine Speeches but I told him he was

a sort of person that might say anything, he was not pleased.—he wishes to be sentimental but I am certain it is all affectation, and his fine Speeches do not flatter for one single moment.

“Your Maid will go on Wednesday, she has just been here. I did not know You had left her behind, and felt pleased to see something that belonged to you.

“I have begun one of the little Views, but feel a little puzzled with the Ivory. My *Ædipus* is hung up in the Library in the place of the More family. Adieu.”

“June 27 1804 Tuesday night.

.

“My necklace did not come in time, which disappointed me, I had never mentioned it to my Mother, supposing You would send it straight down to me when You had exhibited it sufficiently. I like it much tho’ I think the Glasses render the paintings less bright than they were on Your piece of Paper. I am rather better in Health, and in Spirits likewise, Miss Wodehouse has been winding me Up.

“When I am melancholy, it is thinking of the future and the Changes that will in Consequence arise ; and then of the past, by imagining the figure and Occupation of those that were perhaps in their Graves when I was in my Cradle. having passed the greatest part of my Life in old Houses, the residence of many Generations of My Ancestors, may be the reason that from my Childhood I have communed so much with the Dead.—I had much of this at the Guild Dinner, which is a favourite festivity with me.—we were near 500 persons in the Old Gothic Hall

of St Andrews, the Company is seated according to their degree, and when the Cloth is removed, the Town Crier proclaims aloud the toasts that the Major drinks, between each, is a loud music. the Scenery, and the remains of ancient Manners in the Ceremonies is very interesting, and during the 3 hours we sat at table I was making out how the County table was probably filled 300 Years ago."

From Lady Jerningham.

"BOULTON ROW, *July 31, 1804.*

"Many thanks My Dear Miss Betham, for Frederick's Picture. I hope to see someday Your miniatures rival Conways in their Contribution as I am persuaded they soon will in their merit."

.

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"YARMOUTH, *Aug sixth, 1804.*

"*Sunday.*

.

"I am surprised at what Lady D. says of me, particularly of my Children's Education for I do not see that I bring them up differently from other's unless doing the work myself. there is something in the Word *original* that startles me, tho' one may take it as praise.

"*Tor* never comes near Us, he brought his Wife to leave her name one Morning *after* he had bowed to me in the Street, as I was driving out of town with Lady Bradford. I returned the visit and found them

both at home. She is a tall Stout Woman, with a fat face pitted with y^e Small Pox, pretty Eyes, but too light, the Colour of a Cats but in Shadow looking very well, she is talkative and vulgar, and does not seem to be in any *awe* of him. — we spend our time very pleasantly here Lord Bradford and his family and General Milner and his Lady and aid de camps compose our party with the addition of two or 3 very agreeable Military men. I have ample scope for *investigating human nature* and wish You were here to *consult* with. My necklace is universally admired, and I think without Vanity we may hope that You will become a first-rate artist.

.

“my Venerable old Uncle the Archb. of Narbonne is coming into norfolk, the Poet is already there.

.

“the other day arrived a basket of Mushrooms and a Letter to Sir Rich^d from *Memmon* it began thus. ‘as I have not quite lost my Senses I recollected on seeing some Mushrooms brought in that Lady B. *once wished for some* therefore, &c.’—do not You think it an odd beginning. Sir Rich^d said laughing ‘I did not know he was in a way of losing his Wits but this Letter looks something like it.’”

“*March eighteenth,*

“NORWICH, MAGDALEN ST.

.

“I am not Yet in my Castle, but *really* go tomorrow. — My Children are all well and I am

going to give up my mind as much as ever I can to their Education. I think with Zimmerman that nothing is so soothing as the Company of an affectionate Child."

"April 1805.

.
 "I am now at Cossey. — You never answer me upon a certain Subject, are you afraid of getting into a Scrape? or that Your Letters should be seen? there is no danger of either one or the other I assure You—but if You like to be very cautious Speak of *me* in the 3^d person."

"OXBURGH 1805.

.
 "I will tell you that I had rather have *Your* Picture if it is *like You* than a Vandyk so pray send it.

"I shall rejoice to hear that Anne is happily disposed of. do not imagine that I call in question Your Sisterly affection, in a heart like Yours such a thing is out of the question, but I am certain that many details and little cautions that are nothing to Other people, are burthensome to *Your* mind, and of real detriment to Yr health. — I have a mixture in my Character that makes me follow with equal eagerness, pursuits quite opposite. I doubt if ever You could be happy as a married Woman. do not therefore be persuaded to give Your hand from *any motive* but a clear Conviction that it is for Your *own* happiness. You have a Mind that will never allow You to feel the Want of

a Child, You will probably have plenty of nephews and Nieces, and one can love them Sufficiently for Happiness.

"Lady Eleanor Butler has begged me to do two Subjects from the *Lay* for her to put in a fine Edition somebody has given her. she has sent me a little poem transcribed by Miss Ponsonby written by Mrs H. Tighe on friendship and one stanza I like much. The thought I mean, for I rather dislike the Metre.

.

"we have got the Widowed Mrs C—— here, she is a Clever well bred woman but so slow that I feel as if it would relieve me if I could bark at her as dogs do at Sheep. — it seems to be the Fashion for Widows to carry their Weeds all about, Mrs Suly^d did so, and this Lady has been visiting and means to Visit till a Year and a half is elapsed and then she will Settle."

"YARMOUTH 4th Aug. 1805.

.

"Gen^l and Mrs Milner are here and we spend the Evenings entirely together, the *rest* of the party is away. Lady B. at Weeting, L^d B. backw^{ds} and forw^{ds} between that place and Ipswich.

.

"are you not delighted with the *lay* of the *last Minstrel*? I am, and have made his portrait entering with 'hesitating step the portal Arch' of Newark."

ROOM VII.

1805.

*From Lieut. John Betham, to his sister,
Mary Betham.*

“H. E. I. C. SHIP OF WAR, MERCURY,
MOCHA ROADS IN THE
RED SEA *August the*
16th 1805.

“MY DEAR & MUCH LOV'D MARY,

“I now think it is your turn for a Letter from me though if I was to deal fairly you have had already more than your allowance, and pardon me if I say more than you deserve for I've only received one from you whereas I have sent you four—but take all & I'll starve.

“You must know my dear Molly that I am getting stouter than ever I was and am turn'd a proper milk-sop since I've been here, for milk is the best thing in this vile place and thought to be the finest in the Southern World, but we can get no butter, being too hot.

“We are the only English Ship here, and of course are look'd upon with great respect. We sail hence on the 20th for Bombay with a convoy, at least with

a vessel in Tow. We expect anxiously to fall in with Johnny Crappoo off Socotra—this is a fine little vessel and one of the handsomest in India—sails well, and, thank God, pretty well mann'd with 50 Europeans on Board, but 15 of them are Portugese whom of course we dont depend on much. There are also 30 native Sailors, and fourteen of the Marine Battalion. We carry only 14 Guns but I have the vanity to think we are a match for any French vessel of our size if we should be lucky enough to fall in with one.

“I told you to look out for a wife for me but you have been so long about it, that I have one in my eye already whom I suppose you are aware of. Husbands must be very scarce just now as there are so many fine fellows sent on expeditions and so many to India on account of Buonaparte's intended—or pretended attempt.—I should advise you not to wait much longer for it would be a shame for brother Jack to be married before you.

“Our Captain lives on shore at the British Factory and we spend the day with him by turns very pleasantly.

“I shall finish my yarn with some effusions. Well Molly goodbye. Tell my Friends I still love them with the most sincere and lasting affection, and am your

“Friend & Brother,

“J. BETHAM.

“P.S.—Remember me particularly to my old Friend John Wade and all the Doves, Birds—Darby my old comrade & all enquiring Lads and lasses.”

[The "effusions" are several; one "to a Friend," calls up recent powder baptism,

"Along with you at Buporah
Amidst the din and fuss of war;"

another harks back to Stonham,

"Ye Poplars, planted by my Father's care
Whose tow'ring branches whisper in the air,"

and to the "velvet green" of that remote village whereon

"How oft all lonely have I paced along
With a gay heart to hear the Blackbird's song,
Or sat me down conversing with a friend
Beneath the Lilack at the Garden's end.
And thou sweet willow, melancholy Tree,
Weep while I wander on the raging Sea,
How oft responsive, shaded from the day
In fancied sorrows at thy foot I lay,"
etc.

To one of the pieces its young author adds the note, "This was written in a melancholy mood I must own, so you must make the most of it, for ten to one if I write so doleful a ditty again."—There is a disclosure of the lack of naval hosiery in the year of Trafalgar, given in the following, descriptive of the lieutenant's messmates :

"Some laughing, some singing, some smoking cheeroots,
One swearing because he can't get on his boots
To dine with the Capt'n., poor fellow, how shocking,
If he can't get 'em on he has never a stocking!
He hauls & he pulls & he puffs and he swears
And he sweats till he's cold when he finds they're not
pairs !

"Messmates, here's a choice, who'll lend me a pair
"Of stockings that are not the worse for the wear?"—
"I will; you may cut them, they lie on that shelf,
"Keep you the bottoms & I'll have the tops for myself,
"With half-boots and breeches they'll do very well,
"And y'rs with pantaloons, pray who is to tell?"

The lieutenant came to command his own H.E.I.C.'s Man-of War, and took part in the eventful life of the Indian seas in those days. There is a reference to him in the records of the Royal Humane Society: "At a Committee holden at the Society's house, Bridge St., Blackfriars, London, etc. It was resolved unanimously, 'That the unfeigned thanks of this Committee are hereby given to Capⁿ John Betham who in a manner not less creditable to his humanity, than honourable to the office he held of Marine Police Magistrate at the Port of Madras, did on the 24th October 1818 by his very intrepid, persevering and extraordinary exertions, and with extreme peril to himself, rescue the Officers, Passengers and Crew of the ship Success, which was wrecked at the above Port.'"

Matilda Betham's brothers who became "Officers in the service of the Hon^{ble} East India Company," were, besides John; Charles; George; Robert Graham; Edward and Frederick. George and Robert Graham died in India in the prime of life; Edward was drowned in H.E.I. Co.'s ship "Jane, Duchess of Gordon," that foundered in a storm off the Cape of Good Hope in 1809; Frederick, after serving as midshipman, followed his elder brother Charles, and left the watery for the clayey furrows.]

ROOM VIII.

1806-7.

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“COSSEY, *March*, 1806.

“I have been here a Month, we have had no Company whatever, and if I did not feel myself useful to my Parents, I should say it had been dull.—not that I dislike Solitude, but I love my Liberty, and here I have it not. from breakfast till one I teach my children, then I go to My Mother's room till 4 when we dine, in the Evening I blunder thro' two Rubbers of Whist or casino, then comes Supper, and then bed:—I cast a wistful look now and then at the Woods, but I have thought it more proper to Stay in my Cage.—for the same reason I have given Up going to M^{rs} Milner, except once dining there & twice she dined here.—Were you ever in this Sort of Thraldom, when Your presence does not seem to give any particular pleasure but yet Your absenting Yourself tho' only for an hour, displeases.

“I have half a mind to tear this sheet for what I have written seems undutiful and Unfeeling—but I am accustomed to think aloud with You, & God

knows how much I love my parents!—tho' what I have expressed is really what I feel.

"I thought You had forgotten both the Novel and the Music, and if I had met with the Latter I should have bought it, not that I am in a particular hurry.—

"tell me what You think of Mathilde, I was quite overpowered with it, but it might from different circumstances strike me more than it did you.

"we return to Yarmouth on Monday. if You have time to write pray do so: Your Letters are of Singular Comfort:"

"1803.

.

"That a Marriage can be happy without the *passions* of Love, is a known truth, all marriages become in a few years (however happy) devoid of Passion, but affection and esteem remain, and give more calm & content to the heart than the first feelings; there cannot therefore be any objection to beginning with such a certain foundation, it is eating a Plumb Cake, without its being iced with Sugar, which one must do sooner or later, however thick the tempting ingredient is laid on. . . . : I do not at all enter into the motives that make you think 30 too Old. I allow at least 10 Years more.—I am however decided on one point which is that it is extremely imprudent and Useless to enter into any *Engagements* (however conditional) for a *distant period*.—if one of the parties change their minds, it would be indelicate to enforce the promise, if the Affection lasts, the Marriage will follow of course as soon as Circumstances allow, the

most I would ever do for a Man would be to promise that I never would marry Another without his Consent, and that perhaps is foolish."

"April 7, 1806.

"YARMOUTH, *Sunday*.

.
"I thank God that your Excellent Worthy Father is restored to his Family. long may he continue so.—Your Letter made me tremble though I knew the account must finish well by the Seal and the Stile.

.
"I have been Drawing a little in Crayons and like it much, it just suits my hasty impatient Stile of proceeding."

"YARMOUTH, *July 23, 1806*.

.
"General Milner is removed to Colchester, and with them finishes the Set I *lived* in two Years back, nobody now remains! am I glad or Sorry? I do not know perhaps You do. recommend me something to read. we live very retired, and Spend our Evenings almost always at home.—I am got into a new way of writing a Journal, but I have not Courage to explain it now. I had many things to Say, but all on a Sudden I am grown Stupefied and melancholy."

"Nov. 15 1806. *Wednesday*,

"COSSEY.

.
"We had a little dance here last night which has

given me the head ach now, and did not greatly amuse me at the time. My 3 Brothers are here with their Wives, likewise Mrs Cary with her Son and daughter, and M^{de} de Vivefoi, and hers.—this makes a party of 16 and we are very comfortable, the more so as My Father is in good Spirits and Seems to enjoy having his Children about him.

“We are all in a bustle about the Election Which I wish was over, besides the usual disturbance of Such Events, it is particularly painful to me in the present instance from our being Obligated to support Coke and Windham against our old friends the Wodehouses. I say *Obliged* because as Catholics we cannot with *common Sense* Oppose persons Who Support our Cause, particularly when they are employed by the King, which takes away the only pretext against them that we ever could find.—the W's understand this, and it does not alter the friendship which has so long Subsisted between Kimberley and Cossey still it is uncomfortable and seems contrary to our nature to Side with the Wigs.”

“OXBURGH, *Wednesday 26th.*

.

“I have done nothing in the drawing way Since I have been at Oxburgh, but I am going to do some Subjects from the Lay of the last Minstrel for Lady E: Butler to bind Up with a fine Edition she has been made a present of. I wish she was less full of Compliment and I should like the Sort of Commerce we are got into, but as it is, I am humbled and Confounded and too proud to answer in the

same Strain, so I think she won't like me long. We go to Yarmouth next week, for a long time, departures are always to me like little deaths."

" OXBURGH, *May* 19 180(?)7.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,—As they say Extremes touch I suppose that to be the reason why we write so Seldom, and that having nothing to say or having a great deal to say produces the same effect.

" We are come to pay a Week's homage to our old grey Towers. I have only brought Henry with me, as my plan in accompanying Sir Rich^d was to take a little rest.

" I have at last finished my 5 drawings from the Lay. I shall send them to You to look at before they proceed to Llangollen. I have many drawings and other things in my head, but my days are so short, I mean that part which I can dispose of, that Weeks and Months slip away, and little is done. My health also like Yours is often very Uncomfortable, this weather does me good, and when I am calm, I do very well, but a little thing agitates me, and then I am unstrung for a whole day.

" My Poem (as You are pleased to call it) is returned to the Chaos whence it came. I have entirely forgotten it, but I assure You it was not worth remembering.

" Is Mary going back? and is the other going to be married? What have You done with all Your Suitors?—I cannot write, I could talk, but the Spirit that Speaks to You Evaporates upon Paper.

" You dont care about News, besides I have none. the Whites are as usual. M^r. Allen and his friend Dolignon live together like Hermits, I think they

will never Marry unless they Quarrel—this House looks dismal without Children or Servants. Foolish people often say *Fire is Company* without thinking anything about it but that other people say so—now this Morning after considering how Solitary I felt in these vast apartments all silent and quiet, it struck me that the calm stillness of fine weather has more of Solitariness in it than the blustering winds of Winter. after considering all this and straying thro' long labyrinths of Ideas, I found out as a new discovery that *fire was Company* and I felt out of patience with myself at stumbling by way of finish upon such a commonplace observation.—has this ever happened to you? it is like a man exploring a thick forest, and when he has Struggled thro' Bushes and expects some Unknown Scene to charm his Eyes, he turns sharp upon his own garden wall."

From the Same.

"I am gratified and encouraged by what Mr Dixon said of my drawings, it shows him to be a man of liberality.—I wish I was in the way of having Lessons or the Opinions of Artists before I finish my pieces, I mean that I might have the Errors in drawing pointed out as to the Composition. I should always pursue my own Ideas or I could do nothing. I own also to my shame that I am so hurried on by the Subject that I cannot look into books for proportions but go entirely by the Eye, nor do I ever make a Sketch first. the Subject with the Countenances &c flash on my mind all on a Sudden, and I draw it out instantly without trouble as if

I were copying.—the Background I consider a little about—most of the Drawings You have been looking at were drawn at Midnight after my return from some party.—I am like the Witches, midnight is my festive hour. the day is given up to teaching, which keeps the Imagination asleep, but when My little ones are all safe in bed, I then look round me, and feel I have a Soul. I regret the time when I spend these Evening hours abroad, and cannot help indulging myself with a little half hour after my return, however late it may be.

“What do You mean by the Simplicity of Manners of a Woman. do You think we have more of that than men?—adieu,

“believe me most affectionately yours

“C. B.

“I like summer.”

From the Same.

“You are just the sort of person my dear Matilda to lose Your place in a Stage coach, and I bless my Stars that You are not by some mischance got to York instead of to Stonham.

“The Penrices and Cardenio dined here on Sunday. Mrs C—— promised she would come but her Husband ailing her Courage I presume failed her and she sent a late excuse. it was quite as well for I could hardly hold up till they went away. Miss P. played, which dispensed me from talking and I sat the whole evening with my aching head leaning against the marble chimney piece to the seeming dismay of poor Cardenio. Sir Rich^d said next day he had never seen him so out of spirits, the fact was

nobody paid him any particular attention, and he felt the change.—Well, but Mrs. C—— that I meant to be so intimate with? I am not at all sure that she means anything of the kind, not that she appears at all barbarous towards me, but she is extremely *shy*. as You like descriptions You shall have hers, but it must be in my stile of drawing, the general leading character of Countenance with as much of the features as forced themselves on my sight.—her person is Short, plump, and tightly drest. her face fat and rosy & the colour glowing into a blush on every opportunity, her Eyes small & dark, nose little, chin long, or rather the under jaw a little projecting which gives that appearance; her hair in the Madonna Stile, which does not become so solid a face. When I saw her in her own house, she had a beautiful picturesque Girl of 3 years old twining about her with curled flaxen hair and red cheeks. She returned my visit a few days afterw^{ds} with the Capt. and he seemed willing that she should like me. You cannot think how he puffed off every thing. dwelt on every drawing, begged the Children might come and play, praised the Instrument, the performance, whispered about Fanny's *extreme* beauty, flung in a thousand oblique compliments to me, in short I was much amused, and longed for You to explain what all this meant.—I took it to be rather begging mercy for having a Wife, who though apparently very good humour'd, has nothing either handsome, elegant or clever in her appearance, and till her Arrival his great fastidiousness made one suppose that she must be something much above the common run—what think You?

“I have been reading Foxe's Lives of the Stuarts.

I think it rather an Essay on their dispositions than a History of their reigns. he has made up a *Bed of Despotism*, and he pulls and tears and squeezes every thought and private intention of poor James 2 & his Brother Charles, to show how well they fit.

"The Abbé is just setting off for London in the Mail, with his boots better blacked and his hair better powdered than ever they were for an Entertainment, how much more the feelings of the heart regulate the *manner* of our doing things than the exigency of the Circumstance itself.—this man loves his Brother and Sister better than anything else in the world! how wretched must that being live who has no kindred Eye to look kindly on him, and no object to love.—You and I may reasonably hope never to live in that most dreary desert, the solitude of the Heart.—I shall send this to Anne who will send it to You wherever You may be wandering."

ROOM IX.

1808.

From Southey to Matilda Betham.

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"Unluckily I am engaged to breakfast on Friday in Upper Seymour Street, & have afterwards to reach Stockwell to an early dinner. Saturday I go to St Mary's Cray & return on Monday on Tuesday I will be with you at half past ten, if it suit you. If any other morning be more convenient to you, it will be equally so to me.

"I am very much Obligated to you for your little volume. It contains so much of what is really good that I hope the same powers will one day be employed upon something of greater extent.

"Yours respectfully,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"Wednesday morning."

[Among the papers which form the material for this book, is a diary of a tour by coach through England in 1826, taken by Lady Ford, a connection of the Bethams, and three friends, one of whom (the maker of the diary) was Mr J. Hawker, F.S.A.

& Richmond Herald. His notes contain a description of Southey. "This evening I strolled up to Southey the Poet Lauret who lives in a neat House a short distance from Keswick. I had not ever seen him but before he publish'd the first Volume of his history of the Peninsula War he wanted drawings of the places in Spain and Portugal which he described. Gen^l Hawker during his command of the 14th Light Dragoons on the Peninsula had made many beautiful Sketches of the said places, these had been seen in my possession by a friend of the poet's, who applied to me on the subject. I wrote to the General & he begged that M^r Westall would copy any or all the drawings for engravings for Mr. Southey's Book I sent in my card, he hurried out of his Parlour & gave me a hearty welcome. I passed a most agreeable hour with him. His countenance is quite animated, his Nose very aquiline, a full black Eye with large arched dark Eyebrows & the upper lip projecting beyond the under,—in speech rapid, & very pointed—his figure genteel. In every part where it was possible to put a shelf were Books heaped ; I told him they were like the Locusts of the Egyptians, in all quarters—he said he possessed upwards of 7,000 volumes.—He very seldom visits Keswick during the Touring season for then strangers stare at him as they would at a Hippopotamus just emerged from the lake." Southey was fifty-two at the time of this description : at the date of his first letter to Matilda Betham, thirty-four.]

From Coleridge.

"Monday, April 4 1808.

"348 STRAND.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,

" I assure myself that your thinking and affectionate mind will long ago have made a distinction between fame and reputation—between that awful thing which is a fit object of pursuit for the good, and the pursuit of which is an absolute duty of the great; that which lives and is a fellow-labourer of nature under God, producing even in the minds of worldings, a *sort* of docility, which proclaims, as it were, *silence* in the court of noisy human passions, and the reward of which without superstition we may well conceive to be the consciousness in a future state of each being in whose mind and heart the works of the truly famous have awakened the impulses of schemes of after-excellence. What joy would it not be to you, or to me, Miss Betham, to meet a Milton in a future state, and with that reverence due to a superior, pour forth our deep thanks for the noble feelings he had aroused in us, for the impossibility of many mean and vulgar feelings and objects which his writings had secured to us!"

From Coleridge.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,—Your bearer waits, and a gentleman is with me on business. I can therefore only say, that I am pleased and feel myself honoured by your intention, but will in the course of to-morrow morning write a *real answer* to both your

kind letters. Be assured, it will not be one disappointment that shall prevent me from seeing you, though my poor face is a miserable subject for a painter (for in honest truth I am what the world calls, and with more truth than usual, an *ugly* fellow). Yet the mere pleasure of being in your company for two or three hours will be my compensation.

“Sincerely yours,

“S. T. COLERIDGE.”

From Coleridge.

“1808.

“DEAR MISS BETHAM,—Not my will, but accident and necessity, made me a truant from my promise. I was to have left Merton, in Surrey, at half-past eight on Tuesday morning with a Mr Hall, who would have driven me in his chase to town by ten; but having walked an unusual distance on the Monday, and talked and exerted myself in spirits that have long been unknown to me, on my return to my friend's house, being thirsty, I drank at least a quart of lemonade; the consequence was that all Tuesday morning, till indeed two o'clock in the afternoon, I was in exceeding pain, and incapable of quitting my room, or dismissing the hot flannels applied to my body. However, determining to be in town on that night, I left Merton at five, walked stoutly on till I was detained an hour and a half on Clapham Common in an act of mere humanity—indeed a most affecting one, and not uninstructional, if to know by *facts* the dreadfully degraded and hardened hearts the inhabitants of cities and their suburbs may be called instructive. At Vauxhall I took a boat

for Somerset House; two mere children were my Charons; however, though against tide, we sailed safely to the landing-place, when, as I was getting out, one of the little ones (God bless him!) moved the boat. On turning half-way round to reprove him, he moved it again, and I fell back on the landing-place. By my exertions I should have saved my head but for a large stone which I struck against just under my crown, and unfortunately in the very same place which had been contused at Melton when I fell backward after hearing suddenly and most abruptly of Captain Wordsworth's fate in the *Abergavenny*, a most dear friend of mine. Since that time any great agitation has occasioned a feeling of, as it were, a *shuttle* moving from that part of the back of my head horizontally to my forehead, with some pain but more confusion. This sensation the accident brought on with great violence, but it is now abating. As soon as I go out at all I will do myself the pleasure of calling on you, for indeed I very much wish to see you.

"S. T. COLERIDGE.

"Pray would it be possible to draw the following figures for a seal? In the centre (as a coat-of-arms), a rose or myrtle in blossom, on the right hand, a genius (or genie) holding in the right hand two torches inverted, and one at least recently extinguished; on the other side, a Love with a flaring torch and head averted, the torch in the direction of the head, as one gazing after something going away. In the corner of the left part of the composition a large butterfly flying off; the motto under it, 'Che sarà sarà'—What will be, will be."

From Coleridge.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,—I sallied forth to find you, at least your abode, unfortunately leaving your direction behind me. I went to New Cavendish Street, and after many vain inquiries was positively assured by a man at the corner shop that you had removed from Foley Street to Old Cavendish Street, and that you did not reside in New Cavendish Street. I knocked at every door in Old Cavendish Street, not unrecompensed for the present pain by the remembrances of the different characters of voice and countenance with which my question was answered in all gradations, from gentle and hospitable kindness to downright brutality. I failed, returned home, and in the Exhibition Catalogue found your true address. N.B.—I looked, when I was at the Exhibition on Monday (the first open day), at the numbers, in order that I *might not* look at your works *then*. The crowd was so great—the number of detestable pushers so overpowering. But I shall go on Monday, the very moment the rooms are open, in order that I may look at *them* singly, and as much alone as possible. It is quite shocking, that all that is good in the Exhibition is absolutely extinguished by the glare of raw colours put into wild shapes on innocent much-injured canvas. I write now to entreat that you would let me know what day you will be at home and disengaged next week, as I shall keep myself disengaged till I hear from you, for I am most sincerely,

"Your obliged,

"S. T. COLERIDGE.

"*Saturday, May 7, 1808.*

"348 Strand."

From Southey.

“KESWICK, *July 2*, 1808.

“Your letter, my dear madam, has just prevented some arrangements which I was making for the conveyance of the picture to Cumberland, and also for what I perceive must not now be mentioned. Edith desires me to express her thanks at present, and hopes you will one day give her an opportunity of expressing them herself at Keswick. We have heard of the miniature from a friend who saw it unexpectedly in the Exhibition, and was much struck with the likeness. I thank you likewise for your intentions with respect to Coleridge. You would have found him the most wonderful man living in conversation, but the most impracticable one for a painter, and had you begun the picture it is ten thousand to one that you must have finished it from memory. His countenance is the most variable that I have ever seen; sometimes it is kindled with the brightest expression, and sometimes all its light goes out, and is utterly extinguished. Nothing can convey stronger indications of power than his eye, eyebrow, and forehead. Nothing can be more imbecile than all the rest of the face; look at them separately, you would hardly think it possible that they could belong to one head; look at them together, you wonder how they came so, and are puzzled what to expect from a character whose outward and visible signs are so contradictory.

“More than once have I been on the point of writing to you, and as often prevented by some disquieting or distressing circumstance. Within this

week I have deposited in yonder churchyard the little girl who was newly born when you saw me. I had not ceased to thank God for the preservation of my only boy, who had been saved from the croup, when this visitation befell us, and I do not cease to thank Him now. Edith has happily an infant at the breast, a better comforter than I could be; still it will be long before she recovers from the stroke, which was as unexpected as it was severe.

"I go on Thursday next to Durham, to visit my brother, who is just married. My absence from home will not exceed a fortnight. The sooner you arrive after my return the better, for the delight of the country is in the long evenings of Midsummer, and I shall be sorry if you miss them. The straight road from London is to Penrith, one stage short of Carlisle, and eighteen miles from Keswick. From thence there is a stage which runs through this place Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. But if you reach Penrith early enough to come by chaise, it is less wearisome to proceed to a house where you will feel yourself at home, than to pass the night at an inn, for this stage leaves Penrith in the morning. If you come by way of Leeds or Manchester, there is no stage nearer than Kendal, which is thirty miles from hence. It is a long journey, but if you start from London the least fatiguing plan is to take the mail; remember, *not* that which goes by Manchester to Carlisle, for that takes in the unwary passengers for some thirty additional miles, and for a spell of two hours in the dead of the night at a Manchester inn, waiting to be turned over to another coach; but the Carlisle mail, which goes by Newark and Doncaster. I enter into these particulars, because some

of my friends have been deceived by book-keepers, and sent the more circuitous route.

“Allen was at school with me: I remember him well, but never had any intimacy with him. John Dolignon was one of my earliest playmates, and while I was at Westminster his mother's house was my home every Saturday and Sunday. The chances and changes of the world have thrown us far asunder, the more so perhaps because ever since we ceased to associate we must have grown more unlike each other. I used to shoot with him, fish with him, and lay snares for rabbits. These things I could not do now. Were I, however, to meet Dolignon (and I would turn fifty miles from my way for the sake of meeting him), my first feeling would be like that of a brother—we should both shed tears at thinking of his dear mother and of his sister, and when that sympathy was over I should begin to feel a weight at my heart from perceiving how little other sympathy was left us. I know what the feeling is by experience, and there are few feelings more painful.

“The Mr Townsend of whom you speak was to me a new name, for ‘Cumberland's Review’ has not travelled here, and I suppose will not long travel anywhere, some of his assistants having applied for employment to the ‘Quarterly.’ I entreat you, read Wordsworth's pamphlet upon the affairs of Spain, just published by Longman. Only Burke equals it in eloquence, and he only by fits and flashes; but there shines through this the light of truth and of nature and of God, a light of which nothing more than the dim, discoloured reflection ever shone upon Burke.

“God bless you. We shall be glad to hear you

are coming, still more so when you arrive. Edith desires to be remembered to you.

“Yours very truly,

“R. SOUTHEY.”

From Southey.

“KESWICK, *Sep.* 19 1808

“The stones of which this house was built were not quarried when Mr Betham was at Keswick. But I can make him understand the spot on which it stands, & perhaps recall to his memory some persons whom he may long have forgotten.

“He knows the Bridge over the Greta, at the end of the town. There is a little mill on the Keswick side of the bridge; the river flows behind it & makes a long sweep by High Hill & the old Quaker Meeting. On that hill two houses under one roof have been built by William Jackson a waggoner in your father’s time:—he has left off business for some years & lives in the one, & I am his tenant in the other. A worthier hearted man never breathed than this my Landlord, & his housekeeper is as excellent a good woman. . . . Miss Betham, I am sorry to say that whatever may be the case in the higher ranks, the breed of good women is growing scarce in the lower ones, & of this we have lamentable proof here in Cumberland. Manufactories furnish fine clothes to the one sex & bad habits to the other: half the girls die of consumption occasioned by cotton stockings & thin clothing;—& for the other half,—there is scarcely ever a marriage which is not followed by a christening

within the month. It is well the white sheet has been disused, for otherwise clean sheets would be sometimes wanted in Keswick. An inactive clergyman, negligent magistrates, cotton mills & Lakers have ruined the morals of the place. The remoter parts of the country have escaped this contagion, & there the peasantry are what one has dreamt of so often & seldom seen, a frank, friendly, independent happy & virtuous race.

"Any part of the summer will be alike convenient to us to receive you. I should however advise you to come as soon as you can after May day, for spring has almost as much variety as autumn, & what you will most enjoy will be the long & lovely evenings on the Lake. From my study I have the finest imaginable view of the Lake, Borrodale & Newlands & the river Greta, the vale of Keswick & Basenthwaite in the distance to the right. Lodore can be distinctly seen after rain. The Greta passes behind the house, at the foot of our orchard, & Skiddaw reaches within half a mile of us on that side.

"Within doors you will see the best library that ever so poor a man possessed, contained for the most part in a room which seems to have the rare property of making all persons feel comfortable who come into it.

"You will wonder that I make no mention of the picture. It has not yet reached me. My friend Rickman who has been entrusted to bring it with him comes next month. Edith is in great expectation, & I had once nearly disappointed her sadly. There came a packet inclosed in a parcel from Longmans', which from its size &

shape I verily supposed to be this picture, & in that belief was on the point of running to call her that she might see it opened. But liking to be sure of my good tidings I took a prudent peep & found the proof of a little map of Spain which has been engraved for my translation of the Cid.

"I see you have been feeling like a Spanish Lady while these great & heartawakening transactions are going on in that noble country. Oh what a resurrection of all that is great & ennobling have we lived to see! And if Bonaparte were ten times mightier than he is, here he would be foiled.

"As for this rascally affair in Portugal, I would do as the Romans would have done:—refuse to satisfy terms so infamous, & deliver up the Generals who made them to the French, with halters round their necks.

"Yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

From Mrs. Coleridge.

"GRETA HALL,

"Dec. 15, 1808.

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,—For many, many weeks past I have daily hoped for & even expected the favour of a few lines from you,

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"A few weeks after these events the account reached

us of M^{rs}. Coleridge's death (*mother* of S. T. C.) he too was greatly distressed that he could not take a last farewell—but it was next to impossible!—we knew of her illness for some time, but I opposed his going so strenuously as well as his Grasmere friends, knowing what an effect such a scene would have upon his mind & health that it was given up, she had all her family with her except him, and they are very numerous.

“Southey received a letter from you last night—we were rejoiced to hear you were well & that you have still some hopes of the safety of your brother—we have looked constantly in the papers to see if he were arrived, we shall be most happy to congratulate you on the desirable event, or any other that would give you pleasure. I am just returned from a long visit to Grasmere & Brathay. The inmates of Allan Bank are very sorry that they had not the pleasure of seeing you & were at first a little inclined to reflect on me for mismanagement in the business, but C. thought I could not be to blame in anything except that he thought I ought to have come forward with you when we were as far on our road as Wytheburne but you know I knew not what to do for the best, I wish *now* that I had endeavoured to persuade you to go on with me, for it seems you were fully expected to have passed some days there, & when I asked why they had not sent you an invitation, they said they had expressly told Southey they hoped they should see you, & they would show you the country around Grasmere: they thought I might have come with you to Grasmere, but when they found by my appointment of the boys to see you, that you were not going to their

house, they intended calling on you at Lady Diana's.

"My dear friend, I know it will give you pleasure to hear that I was very comfortable during my visits in Westmorland. C. came often to Brathay before I went to Grasmere, & kindly acceded to my wish of taking my little daughter home again with me after she had passed a fortnight with him until Xmas, & then to bring her home with her brothers, but as I was obliged to have a Chaise to return, it would have been a sad pity to have returned alone, for C. could not come, he was so very busy.

"Mrs. Wordsworth was going to Kendal for a month & Miss Wordsworth could not leave home in her absence, but they are both to come after Xmas and C. is to spend the last week of the Boy's holidays here & take them back with him. C. tells me (for I scolded him for his behaviour towards you) that he walked 3 hours one day in search of you & could not find your house; he was in Cavendish street, enquired at several doors—no one could direct him and he returned home ill, & much provoked with his disappointment.

"Dr Miss B. should you not have your name on your door?—how else shall I find you, for I am a perfect fool in London. I lost myself twice when I was there last. Without jesting, I think you should have your name.

"Let me hear from you soon I shall be most glad to see you again either here or in town, for I hope you will soon come again to see us, & I will myself introduce you to C—— & he to his invaluable friends.

"I have some thoughts of keeping back my letter,

but Southey advises me to send it off, for he will write to you on the arrival of the pictures.

“Believe me,

“affectionately yours,

“S. COLERIDGE.”

From Southey.

(front part missing)

. . . . Courier signed G. upon the Cintra Convention are by Wordsworth, & will be separately published—they express our opinions here. Were I a single man I would hasten to Spain as to a crusade, & if possible get to Taragore in time for the siege. Oh doubt not that that country will redeem, is redeeming itself! Even if Bonaparte bears down all opposition for a time, & conquers the country, he will not have conquered the people—whenever the pressure of his armies is withdrawn they will rise against him.—his whole force will be required to keep them down, (even if he gets them down) & ultimately the vengeance of God & man will strike him when his work is done.

“Edith begs me to express her thanks for the picture & to say how glad she shall be to express them herself—

“believe me

“Yours very truly,

“ROBERT SOUTHEY.”

ROOM X.

1809—12.

From Southey.

“KESWICK,

“*Jan.* 17, 1809.

“You make a right distinction, my dear Miss Betham, between the egotism of words & of actions. The egotism of the heart seldom reaches to the life, none are so intensely selfish as the races of fawners & flatterers, who always talk about *you* for the sake of making *them*-selves appear amiable. Those letters are always the more interesting which are most about the writer. Am I wrong in supposing that generous minds express themselves more fully by the pen than by word of mouth, whereas a knave never lays himself open except he is thrown off his guard in conversation. I have myself not as much a principle, as an instinct of unreservedness, nor do I know whether I can help it or no, for I never tried the experiment. My very reserve resembles the rolling itself up of a hedgehog, & is a manifestation too plain to be mistaken that I do not like my company. Yet I am sensible that I express myself more fully & more freely when writing by my own

fireside, than ever I do at an after dinner table, or in the most confidential personal intercourse.

"In June then we hope & look to see you here. What the picture wants can easily be given it—or rather what it has too much of can easily be taken away. My face has had none of that bloom for about seventeen years. There must be a strong Southey character about it, for every body recognises me, but thinks more of my brother Henry. But Henry's face has got him into so many love scrapes that I have told him he ought not to go about without a muzzle, a precaution of which I never felt the slightest occasion myself—My skin thickened just as I ceased to be a boy, I was always lean, & at that age when men in general think of nothing but their pleasure I had occasion both for thought & feeling which have left their indelible stamp upon my strong features.

"By the time you arrive my Hindoo Poem will probably be finished. Should it be completed to my own satisfaction, I have a wish about it which I will not explain till you have seen the story, & then I think you will guess it.

"I promise to myself many pleasures in seeing you here, in showing you the mountains from these windows, in rowing you to the spot where we boil our kettle by the lake-side, in seeing you, tempted by emulation at the example of my boat *women*, take the oars in your hand instead of the pencil,—in guiding you over the mountains & into the glens, in talking to you about your poems & telling you what you could do,—& in showing you how very happy a man may be upon very scanty means who cares nothing for the pomps & vanities of the world &

preserves a boy's heart when the grey hairs are beginning to show themselves. And in pointing out to you the house where your father lodged, & the school in which he taught."

.

From Southey.

"I am closely employed upon the Register for 1810. Have you any verses which you would like to insert in the miscellaneous Volume? If so transmit them to me. I shall like to see something of yours there.

"Edith & her sister desire their love. You will probably see Coleridge,—& have heard no doubt of the mischief that has been made, unintentionally I believe, between him & Wordsworth. My own opinion which you may perhaps like to know upon this provoking business is that M. has acted with a degree of folly which would be absolutely incredible in any other person,—that W. is no otherwise blamable than in having said anything to such a man which he would have felt any dislike to seeing in the Morning Post,—that I do not wonder at C.'s resentment, that I heartily wish the business could be made up, but very much fear that it never will.

"God bless you,

"yrs most truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"I sent nobody to give you any other trouble than that of exhibiting the family group, nor have I heard who has taken the pains of going to see them except Bedford and Neville White (Henry's brother). He

thought the last year's picture of myself a better likeness than this."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"I am a Melancholy Hermit & only go out to take a wild walk among the hills which are within 3 minutes reach. it is delightful to have Solitude and Nature at one's very door. I wish you could see what a delightful habitation we have got.

.

"I cannot subscribe to Mr. H.'s book. I am not fond of that sort of Philosophical Surgery."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"OXBURGH, Sep. 21 1809(?).

"Your first letter travelled round the World after me, and when I read it only a few days ago, I was quite wild at the Idea of losing the only Opportunity that I may have of seeing You for Years. Your letter of Yesterday however speaks better things.— I do not think we shall go to Cossey these 6 weeks. therefore You must see me and my Penates or not at all. give me as much time as You can, for I too have much to say and much to hear."

From Mrs. Coleridge.

"1810.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"If my memory be not deceitful I think you are in my debt on the score of letter writing, but having a piece of Keswick news to communicate I sit down to tell you that your acquaintance Miss S—— was married last week to an Attorney of this



SIR WILLIAM BETHAM,
Eldest Son of Rev. William Betham.

From an oil-painting by Maclure, R.A.



town & it was a stolen wedding. The young man it seems has nothing & bears a most profligate character, is much younger than herself, & has but little practice,—but as I have only heard these things from a person ill-disposed towards the match perhaps it does not all deserve credit, but if only half be true, she, poor girl, had better have remained in blessed singleness all her life long.—Poor old Mr S—— was in a ‘sad taking’ when he was told that the *knot* was *tied* & resented Mr Calvert’s wishing him joy, telling him in a sharp tone, ‘twas nae joy at all,’ for his part he had intended if they had behaved as they ought to have done to have been in money matters ‘*varra ooncommon genteel*,’ but *he* should *now* never touch a farthing of his money, for what he gave should be secured to his daughter, & paid in small sums at stated periods.

“My brother and sister Southey are just returned from Durham; they have left the Lieutenant behind with the Doctor. Coleridge has been with us for some time past in good health, spirits, and humour, but the ‘Friend’ for some unaccountable reason or for no reason at all, is utterly silent. This, you will easily believe, is matter of perpetual grief to me, but I am not only obliged to be silent on the subject, although ever uppermost in my thoughts, but I am obliged to bear about a cheerful countenance, knowing as I do by sad experience that to expostulate, or even to hazard one anxious look, would soon drive him hence. Coleridge sends you his best thanks for the elegant little book; I shall not, however, let it be carried over to Grasmere, for *there* it would soon be *soiled*, for the Wordsworths are woeful destroyers of good books, as our poor

library will witness. M^{rs} Wordsworth is now confined of her fifth child, a son ; and our friends the Lloyds have just lost one of theirs by the croup. We expect another little Southey in July. Have you ever heard any tidings of the Indiaman ? I fear not ; I shall only distress you by asking.

“Coleridge begs me to repeat to you his great regret at not having seen you in this country ; he likes the pictures of the two Ediths *much* ; nay, very, very much. I must at the same time confess that he was a little disappointed in his daughter's little picture : he regretted, he said, that you had not time to give it your *last hand* ; this is an equivocal phrase, but you will understand it.

“My dear Miss Betham, I wish you would favour me with a few lines very soon, and tell me about your sisters and brothers, your father and mother, and of all that interests you and is proper for me to hear. Of my sister Lovell & her concerns I conclude you are informed by herself. Edith begs her most kind love may be sent you, she hopes you will not think that you will not live in her remembrance & affection because she does not write, which she would most assuredly do, if Mary or I were not sometimes to address you. Tell me about the Shelwalls, the Lambs, Montagues and Holcrofts. Remember me kindly to those by whom I am known or recollected ; to the Lambs in particular. Little Algernon Montague has come to Ambleside to go to the same school with our Boys,—if I had a house of my own I should certainly have him here these next holidays, but that is impossible for even my own boys must take all their meals in with M^{rs} Wilson because unfortunately it so happens that

during Midsummer we shall have a house full, or rather a succession of friends as we had last midsummer. Southey talks of going to London in the autumn, if so you will see him. Southey, my husband and sisters, with Mrs Wilson, unite with me in best remembrances ; and I remain, my dear friend,

"Yours very sincerely,
" S. COLERIDGE."

From Mrs. Lovell.

" KESWICK, Aug. 5th 1810.
" MY DEAR MISS BETHAM.

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"Br Coleridge talks of going to town, but the time is uncertain. Finding we were exceedingly terrified by Derwent's falling from a place that he was climbing & breaking his arm in consequence, Mr Coleridge who was here was so agitated that we thought it would have made him ill, his feelings are so intense, but fortunately he did not suffer in his health.

"Mr & Miss Wordsworth are on a visit to Sir George Beaumont, but expected home soon.

"believe me affectionately yours
"MARY LOVELL."

From Southey.

"Oct. 3, 1810.

"One reason why you have not for so long time heard from me you will readily have imagined,—

knowing how idly I am disposed to pass my time, & how many employments there are for me, whenever I sit down to the desk. Another has been that I have very long been expecting to see the end of your old acquaintance Kehama, & telling you when you might look for him in New Cavendish St. The final proof sheet reached me last week, & unless any accident happen to delay it, it must I think be ready for publication the first week in November.

"Thank you for remembering my little Neapolitan or Sicilian book,—& I am obliged also to Miss Holcroft for remembering it, & recollecting its owner. The length of time & intervening circumstances since poor Holcroft took it from my lodgings had made me long since consider it as lost, but I shall be truly glad to recover it. If you can find means of conveying it to Longman's, it will come down in one of his parcels. Herbert was delighted at the arrival of his picture, one soft speck of paper only has stuck to it, but Mrs Lovell is seriously injured in this manner, paper having clung to the whole of the hair, luckily the other parts of the picture have escaped, & this can be easily washed out & replaced. Had the face suffered it would have really grieved me, for it is as fine & perfect a likeness as ever was produced.

"Do you know that I have a daughter Katherine who is now two months old? & little Bertha is grown big enough & beautiful enough for your pencil were you here. I call her my live Doll, she is such a kissable & playable creature.

"We expect every day to see the Montagues. I hope to see you early in the spring.—my hands will then be rid of any immediate work, & if possible,

—that is if she can be prevailed upon, Edith is to accompany me.

“God bless you,

“Yrs very truly,

“ROBERT SOUTHEY.”

From Mary Lamb.

“MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,—My brother and myself return you a thousand thanks for your kind communication. We have read your poems many times over with increased interest, and very much wish to see you to tell you how highly we have been pleased with it. May we beg one favour? I keep the manuscript in the hope that you will grant it. It is that, either now or when the whole poem is completed, you will read it over with us. When I say with *us*, of course I mean Charles. I know that *you* have many judicious friends, but I have so often known my brother spy out errors in a manuscript which has passed through many judicious hands, that I shall not be easy if you do not permit him to look yours carefully through with you; and also you *must* allow him to correct the press for you.

“If I knew where to find you I would call upon you. Should you feel nervous at the idea of meeting Charles in the capacity of a *severe censor*, give me a line, and I will come to you anywhere, and convince you in five minutes that he is even timid, stammers, and can scarcely speak for modesty and fear of giving pain when he finds himself placed in that kind of office. Shall I appoint a time to see you here when he is from home? I will send him out any time you will name; indeed, I am always naturally

alone till four o'clock. If you are nervous about coming, remember I am equally so about the liberty I have taken, and shall be till we meet and laugh off our mutual fears.

"Yours most affectionately,
"M. LAMB."

From Mary Lamb.

"Feb. 1811.

"MY DEAR MATILDA.

"Coleridge has given me a very chearful promise that he will wait on Lady Jerningham any day you will be pleased to appoint. he offered to write to you, but as I found it was to be done *tomorrow*, & as I am pretty well acquainted with his *tomorrows*, I thought good to let you know his determination *today*. He is in town at present but as he is often going to Hammersmith for a night or two you had better perhaps send the invitation through me, & I will manage it for you as well as I can. You had better let him have four or five days previous notice & you had better send the invitation as soon as you can, for he seems tolerably well just now. I mention all these matters because I wish to do the *best* I can, perceiving, as I do, that is a thing that you have set your heart upon. He dined in company with Catilana (Is that the way you spell her Italian name, I am reading Sallust & had like to have written her Catiline) How I should have liked, & how you would have liked, to have seen Coleridge & Catilana together.

"Yours affectionately,
"M. LAMB."

From the Same.

"Wednesday.

"alas Wednesday shines no longer to me now.—Miss Duncan played famously in the new comedy which went off famously. By the way she put in a spiteful piece of wit I verily believe of her own head, and methought she stared me full in the face. The words were, 'as silent as an author in company.' Her hair and herself looked remarkably well."

From Lady Jerningham.

"Feb. 1811.

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,—I have been pleased with your Friends, tho', (which is not Singular) they sometimes fly higher than my imagination can follow. I think the author ought to mix more, I will not say with fools, but with People of Common Comprehension. his own intellect would be as bright, and what emanated from it more Clear. this is perhaps a very impertinent Remark for me to venture at making, but your indulgence invites Sincerity. pray Let me See you soon and Remember that I am always at home at five oclock as well as Later & always glad to see you.

"ever yours,

"F. JERNINGHAM."

From Coleridge.

"Thursday Afternoon.

"34 SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS,

"CHANCERY LANE.

"Feb. 1811.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,

"True history will be my sufficient apology. After my return from Lady J.'s on Monday night or

rather morning, I awoke from my first short sleep unusually indisposed, and was at last forced to call up the good daughter of the house at an early hour to get me hot water and procure me medicine. I could not leave my bed till past six Monday evening, when I crawled out in order to see Charles Lamb, and to afford him such poor comfort as my society might perhaps do in the present dejection of his spirits and loneliness. This did not mend the matter with me. I became worse and kept my bed all Tuesday and the greater part of yesterday. But thinking myself a little better yesterday morning I determined to keep my engagement with you, and accordingly got up about four o'clock and attempted to dress myself for an evening visit. Half an hour's experience, however, was enough to show the imprudence of the attempt. To walk would have been out of my power, and had I gone and returned in a coach, I should only have brought an *alarm*, instead of a visitor, being too unwell to have conversed, and agitated by the apprehension of being taken sick and giddy, in the presence of strangers perhaps, and three miles from my lodgings. It was too late to send you a note by the twopenny post, and I have no servant. I am a little, and only a little, better at present ; if it be possible I shall put myself in the Hammersmith stage this evening, as I am not fit to be in lodgings by myself. In truth, I have had such a series of anxieties cruel disappointments, and sudden shocks, from the first week of my arrival in London, that any new calamity suffices to upset me. The tidings of George Burnet's death, with its circumstances, told me in the most abrupt manner, and then as abruptly, and before I could prevent it, told to Mary Lamb,

had agitated me violently, and the extreme efforts I made to suppress the bodily effects of my agitation in her presence, injured me still more. She dropped certain ominous words at the time, and on Saturday night, when I was somewhat recovering my spirits, having received a cheerful and humourous note from Charles Lamb, inclosing a scrap of your letter with Lady Jerningham's address, but informing my hospitable friends that he and his sister would come and dine with them—notwithstanding on the Saturday night, as I was walking out with M^{rs} Morgan and her sister to meet M^r Morgan as he returned from town, and just as my whole tone of feeling was harmonized and become genial by the mild vernal air and the almost gay moonlight, M^r Morgan replied to our welcoming with the sad news that Mary Lamb had been attacked with her complaint at five o'clock that morning, and taken off to the country by Charles at seven! On the Sunday William Godwin called on me, to inform me that Miss Lamb had been at their house on Friday, and that her manner of conversation had greatly alarmed them (dear excellent creature! such is the restraining power of her love for Charles Lamb over her mind, that he is always the last person in whose presence any alienation of her understanding betrays itself), that she talked far more and with more agitation concerning me than about G. Burnet, and told M^{rs} Godwin that she herself had written to William Wordsworth exhorting him to come to town immediately, for that my mind was seriously unhinged. After M^r Godwin's departure Lamb came I had just time enough to have half an hour's mournful conversation with him. He displayed such fortitude

in his manners, and such a ravage of mental suffering in his countenance, that I walked off, my head throbbing with long weeping and the unnecessary haste I made in fear of being too late, and the having to act before the curtain as it were afterwards; for the more I force away my attention from any inward distress the worse it becomes after, and what I keep out of my mind, or rather *keep down* in a state of under-consciousness, is sure to act meanwhile with its whole power of poison on my body. This, my dear Miss Betham, waiving all connexion of sentences, is the history of my breach of engagement, of its cause, and of the occasion of that cause. Remember me to your brother, and be assured that I am, with unfeigned and affectionate esteem,

“Yours most respectfully,

“S T COLERIDGE.”

From Mrs. Coleridge.

“GRETA HALL, *Sunday 16 Feb.*

“MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,

“I should long since have troubled you with a few lines if I had not waited for a letter from Mr Coleridge, who I hoped would be able to give me some account of you during his visit to Mr and Mrs Montague. Three months & more have elapsed & he has not *once* addressed any of his northern friends, & we have heard very little of him from other persons, of course I have passed a very uneasy winter. Last Sunday (having by chance heard that he was at W^m Morgan’s at Hammersmith) I wrote a letter to my friend Mrs Morgan, who informed me

(to my great surprise) that he had been with them ever since the 3rd day of November, & is at this time at lodgings in Southampton Buildings with an intention of applying for advice from M^r Abernethy—he had left there about a week, had visited them once since & was in very good spirits. When M^{rs} Montague was here I ventured to make the request of a few lines from her if she found C. was not in the habit of writing. I now fear I made an improper request as I have not heard from her—perhaps C. did not remain long under her roof, but I am altogether in the dark about C. & his affairs excepting the slight intelligence I have just received from kind M^{rs} Morgan.

“I received from your remembrances from Southey’s letter (in acknowledgment of Kehama) but I want to hear more about you, perhaps you will have the charity to write to me very soon. I ought to have answered your note by M^{rs} Montague—you wish to know how we liked her, it is sufficient to say that if we were as well acquainted with her as you are, we should admire her full as much no doubt.—she is very sensible & interesting & so much like Southey’s mother, that I could almost have fancied her in the room with us; one evening, after supper, I so far forgot myself, in sitting half behind her chair to listen if her voice was really so much like our dear friend’s as it seemed when looking at her, that I was just going to lean my forehead upon her shoulder (as in times of old) when recollection came. I remember M^{rs} Southey ever since Southey was six years old.

“If you are not very particularly engaged may I expect a letter from you in a few days after you

receive this? I think if you had seen C. you would have written to me to tell me of it. M^{rs} M. in her letter hints about a dis-agreement between C. & M^r Carlisle. I heard something of this before, but can make nothing of it. I wish C. would write, both Southey & myself have often written to him, but can obtain nothing. You will probably see Southey in town in the spring.

"My brother & sisters unite with me in kindest remembrances to you, & I remain dear Miss Betham,

"very affectionately yours,

"SARA COLERIDGE.

"This very day Coleridge left us 4 months ago, he had been here 5 months in better health, spirits & humour than I had seen him for any great length of time for years before—I fear he has been different since he left us."

From Mrs. Lovell.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,

"When your Letter arrived M^r & M^{rs} Southey with their eldest daughter, the little girl that *was*, the great girl that *is* had left Keswick for London nearly a week—they are all gone to join D^r Southey's party of pleasure. They will be away two months, perhaps more, so that it will be in the middle of November before they will be at home, by that time the weather will be very cold. I wish you could contrive to come before it is so late in the year—if you delay your visit until next year I hope you will be able to manage it so. We have been a long time expecting you—if you had come about a

month since you would have seen some very pleasant people, but like summer birds they have left us to our frozen lakes & snowy mountains. Etc.

"I remain,

"Your affectionate friend,

"MARY LOVELL.

"Mrs C. sends her love."

From Charles Lamb.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,—I am very sorry, but I was pre-engaged for this evening when Eliza communicated the contents of your letter. She herself also is gone to Walworth to pass some days with Miss Hays—

"G—d forbid I should
pass my days
with Miss H—ys

"but that is neither here nor there. We will both atone for this accident by calling upon you as early as possible.

"I am setting out to engage Mr Dyer to your Party, but what the issue of my adventure will be, cannot be known, till the wafer has closed up this note for ever. Yours truly,

"C. LAMB.

"*Friday.*"

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"*April 18th 1811.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND.

"You are half mad, and I like You so extremely so pray do not get well before I arrive.

"I don't know much of Your London Moons, but I know that in the country, we can read Letters, and look at watches by its light, & I actually tried the experiment about the time that drawing, You allude to was done.

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"I lead a regular monotonous Life that is *very good for me* though I own, a Sigh will come sometimes when I see My painting Box covered with Dust and my harp Strings dried in their case.—Your Talents are Your Duties, but mine (if I have any) must be considered like exuberant Shoots, and for the present at least be pruned away! lest they take from the Life and Vigour of the Stem which must be the support of so many tender plants that cling round it.—I am not Speaking of bodily health, but of that Steadiness and Composure of mind, so necessary to *me*. adieu, long loved & well loved friend."

From Southey.

"KESWICK Oct 30th 1811.

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"I saw Richter's pictures at Liverpool, & having previously seen his studies for the subject of Christ restoring sight to the Blind, I have no doubt that he has acted with a proper confidence in his own talents in passing from the comic to the heroic line of art, and as little do I doubt that he will be as eminently successful in the one as in the other. Indeed he is a first rate genius. Since our return I have got on

with Pelage, highly to my own satisfaction. I long to show you a scene the whole application of which bears upon the present state of Spain, & what I think is in a higher strain of passion than anything in my former power. Next year I hope we shall see you here. Bertha whom you remember in arms is now a great rosy cheeked girl—so plump and square faced as to have got the name of Queen Henry the 8th. The 'moon' has the same face with a less healthy appearance than when you used to make him sit on the floor for his picture. We are all going well thank God. I have been writing on the business of Bell & the Dragon in the Quarterly, and am about to enlarge and reprint the articles for the purpose of striking a desperate & deadly blow at the Edinburgh which I shall hold up to contempt and indignation for the gross folly & gross falsehood which it has discharged upon the subject."

From Charles Lamb.

(?) 1811—12.

"DEAR MISS B.—I send you three Tickets which will serve the first course of C.'s Lectures, six in number, the first begins tomorrow. Excuse the cover being not *or fa*, is not that french? I have no writing paper.

"Yours truly,

"C. LAMB.

"N.B. It is my present, not C's id. est he gave 'em me, I you."

From Southey.

“KESWICK, *April* 25, 1812.

“Some of our Reformers whose dunghill spirits look to nothing but economy & found their whole principles of policy upon the rule of Profit & Loss, have recommended that the privilege of franking should be abolished. Now if it were left to me to determine coolly & conscientiously whether it should be abolished or whether those persons who call out for its abolishment should be hanged, I should send an order to his Majesty’s Halter maker to prepare a greater number of hempen necklaces than he is usually in the habit of manufacturing. Perhaps you do not know that the ropes used on such occasions are manufactured for the purpose, the noose, or rather noose-hole being made in them, like the eye of a needle, ready to be threaded with the other end. Franking is almost the only instance in which an act of government contributes directly to keep up kindly feelings & promote the real comforts of intellectual life. I could write a long chapter upon this subject, but I was led to it by thinking it was one of the comforts of a frank that it removed all scruple at writing a short letter,—for a few lines I was resolved upon writing to you only to say that you promised to see us this summer that we have not forgotten the promise, & are looking forward with great pleasure to its performance.

“We have to show you a little girl whom you have never seen, one whom you will not recognise, & two elder children no otherwise altered than as they are

grown—otherwise in character & countenance the same. I have also some Pelago to show you, in its slow progress it has now reached to 1600 lines—no more! but I think of quickening my pace.”

ROOM XI.

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"BATH, Jan. 16, 1813.

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"My Mother is much better. One night last week She consented to be carried down to the Drawing room, in honor of a Christmas Entertainment I gave the Children, and she remained in the midst of the bustle of 20 Children dressed up, and 43 grown up persons, laughing at their appearance, without fatigue, I therefore hope her constitution is restored."

"I am glad You are with Lady St^t John, it will rest Your mind to be free from Household cares for a While. I feel it a relief if by chance I dine out, and have not got the dinner to Order.

"I wish You could come some time or other to Bath, I could introduce You to some pleasant, clever people here, and I feel a great personal want of talking and being with You, which I never can comfortably unless You are under my roof. Bath in Summer is delightful.—in the Season I am too worried with invitations and had rather be any where.

"I see Miss Holford the poetess some times, she is good humoured but has a remarkable Saucy, bold,



BARBARA,
Fifth daughter of Rev. Wm. Betham.

From a sketch.

countenance, very plain.—I meet Miss Hamilton sometimes but do not know her. she is not a beauty, but I like her countenance better than that of the other. her upper front teeth project very unpleasantly when she laughs, and her Eyes shut up into nothing.

“I wish You would write a novel. You have Seen enough of the world now to paint its Manners, and I think it would be an easy and Speedy means of raising a little Money. pray take it into consideration.

“My Mother, Sir Rich^d and the big little ones desire their Love to You. I wish I could tell You half the feelings of regard that always accompany My recollections of You. Our friendship has now acquired a duration that seems to render it Sacred as well as vivid, and I only lament that so much time Slips away that might be spent in social intercourse—where shall we? where can we meet?”

From the Same.

“1st May, 4 o'clock.

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 “Your Br John is not lost he dines with Us to day for the 3^d time for we like him much. he has found attractions at Bath, and I think he would do well to follow up the business, tho' as a *grave Matron*, I cannot meddle in it, I really should feel glad if I heard he was got safe to Gretna Green. he will tell all about it.

“I am glad You are set to work *con Amore*. if You would like and have not already any acquaintance with Johanna Baillie, I believe I could manage

it for You, by bringing You acquainted with Mrs. Hoare her great Friend.—

“pray contrive to come to me this Summer, this beautiful Scenery would Sooth your mind, and a little rest from the tiresome attention to House bills would do You good. I shall not move from here till the Autumn.

.

“here are several clever & pleasing people that You would like. How is all Your Set, poor Miss Lamb, &c. &c.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“BATH, *Thursday night*,

“Oct. 14, 1813.

“Pray do not *puzzle* the poor Creature it is difficult to Understand exactly what he means when he speaks English because he cannot be a Judge of the exact acceptation of the terms in our Language, neither can You (and much less I) be very good Judges of what he means when he Speaks Italian. pray be kind to him when he goes to see You in Town & let me know exactly how he looks.”

From the Same.

“BATH.

“Our cousins are still here, we have made several little Tours, one over the passage to Chepstow, Tintern, &c. Thornbury & Berkeley Castle—twice to Shepton Mallet to see Metcalfe &c she is grown quite fat & is actually overflowing with Joy. M^{rs} Schim. passed three days here very *peaceably* You

have done her a great deal of good for which *I thank You*. she is now Staying with Miss Maltby, & has invited herself to Breakfast here tomorrow. Miss Hurry is with her, I met them this Morning in the Street, & thought she looked a very pleasing Girl. poor Henry went away at the end of his Holidays with Mr. Glover, a Young priest whom I believe You saw here, he is one of the Masters at Stonyhurst. —

“Sir Rich^d & his Cousins are got into a way of playing Cards every evening and we dine now at 6, to enjoy the whole length of the Morning. — this Letter is taken to Town by Niguel who *will* leave me, her reason is an odd one, she wishes to find an *inferior* place, this is too good for her. I really think she is a little mad.

“A person knocked at our Door last night about 8, to say that there was a well dressed woman with a Young child sitting under a Hedge in the road, & he thought from her manner & distress of mind she must be mad. with this Intelligence he left us & pursued his way. You may guess that I immediately went in search of this poor female, I found her where he said Crying over the Child. At first she would give no account of herself. I therefore ceased questioning her but began admiring the Child (tho’ I could scarce see it) and by degrees I got her gently along, & at last into the House. She sat down in the passage in a sort of hopeless agony, the Child looked up at me & smiled, and she let me take it in my arms. it was a pretty little fair Girl about 18 months old, neatly dressed in a white frock, the Mother appeared about 22, extremely well clothed like a Tradesman’s wife. At first she would neither

eat nor drink but I sent for some Bread & Butter for the child, which it devoured, & when it had finished I observed the Mother snatch up some little bits it had left and swallow them eagerly. I then sent for more food, & at last by Soothing her, I got her to Eat & drink some Tea, & she then told me she came from Dublin. she had married without her Mother's consent and her Husband had forsaken her & was gone for a Soldier. grief & wounded pride (for her Mother would not notice her) made her give up her business in Dublin & come to Bath. accordingly she sold her furniture & came here 2 months ago with her Child & a Young Girl her apprentice. A perfect Stranger here, she could get no employment, and having spent all the Money she brought with her she was now reduced to the greatest Misery & despair, and had had nothing to eat all Day. What her intention was in wandering about in the Dark I cannot tell, but I fear she might have been tempted to fling herself with her Child into the Canal. — I have seen her to-Day and shall not lose Sight of her, tho' I can do but little for her. I hope you are not tired of my long Story, but I own my head is full of her & her distress."

From the Same.

"I have not touched a pencil since I arrived in Bath! and Yet my Brain sometimes aches with gathering images & circumstances.

"I believe our Imaginations are more lively than those of many others, so that we feel less the necessity of renovating our recollection of each other by Letters, at least I can assure You that when my

thoughts visit You, the Picture has all its wonted Warmth of Colouring, and Strikes as vividly on my Mind, as in those days when circumstances led to more frequent intercourse.

“So Mrs Holcroft is married.”

From the Same.

“Ap. 23. 1814.

“I received a Gloster Paper the other Day sent I suppose by Y^r Brother for which pray thank him when You write. The tryal has turned out as we thought it would.

“Sir Richard is still away, and I had to testify my joy upon the late Events all by myself.—I was almost worked up to a fever with Joy and all sorts of feelings.—what a fine Tragedy has Buonaparte Spoilt, by ending in so poor a Manner and Yet in some time hence I prophecy it will be The fashion to Visit the Isle of *Elba* and admire its Liege Lord.—

“I saw Doctor Bell the other day, when Fanny entered the room he said he had seen her Picture at Your House. this shows that it is like.”

From Southey.

“26 April, 1814.

“I like your poem very much, & this is the best criticism that can be offered upon it. The plan can not be judged of from a part only, but the execution is what I expected & hoped it would be. The little specimen of this kind in your printed volume made me expect something as good as this.

"I have usually heard *vagaries* pronounced with the accent in the middle. You lay it upon the beginning of the word. Are you sure that you are right? I am not sure that you are wrong.

"When shall we see you here? I am shortly forthcoming with my series of Inscriptions upon the Spanish war. I write to Longman by the next post & shall desire him to send you a copy of the portable Roderick now that I have your direction.

"Love from all. God bless you.

"R. S."

From Southey.

"KESWICK, May 15, 1814.

"First to the first part of your letter. Very glad should I be if I could point out to you any profitable employment in literature; but they who know most of such things best know how exceeding difficult this is. Nothing is so likely to succeed as a dramatic attempt, and I should think it very possible you might adapt some of our old plays to the stage. Of these the emolument would be considerable. Next to this the most promising attempt would be to versify some popular tale; better still, to manufacture one with a melodrama or grand spectacle for the stage. These are things which may be talked over at leisure when you come to us; we shall all rejoice to see you, and it is very likely that among my books you may find something which will suit your purpose. So bear in mind that you are expected here, and the sooner you come the better. . . . I have a fine square daughter to show you, called Isabel, after her godfather, Dr Bell, and who,

live as long as she will, 'will be a Belle still.' When shall we see you ?

"Yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

From the Same.

"MAY 30, 1814.

"What you have sent me promises well ; and you may be assured that it will give me great pleasure to see it in progress, and comment upon it as far as any remarks are likely to be of use, or can be made without a knowledge of the plan.

"I think I know Whom you mean, a Marie somewhat, whose name and history I will look for. It would be very desirable that you should see her lays ; the writing is likely not to be difficult, as it probably was written in an age when scrawling was not common ; but I dare say that George Dyer would lend you his eyes, if your own should be puzzled. Go with him some day and reconnoitre them. If they are not very numerous, you will insure an antiquarian value in your book by inserting them. Why have you not noticed the most important part of my last note, that wherein Edith asked when we might expect you ? You must come and make rhyme sketches from nature for your poem.

"Love from all, great and small,

"Yours most truly,

"R. SOUTHEY.

"Who was that lady who came with you to Smith the sculptor's, and wanted to hear more of

‘Roderick’ than I had time to read? I like her face well enough to ask to whom it belongs, for I did not catch her name.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“BATH, *Sept* 18th 1814.

“I have for these 3 weeks past risen every morning at 6. My Bedroom window commands a delightful prospect, and I sit upon my table with my feet upon a Chair, and enjoy two hours of Leisure and Solitude before my Children’s Lessons begin—this is an enjoyment that none but those who are tied down to Monotonous Employments during the day can conceive. it is a gift of Longer Life given in daily portions. it is this addition of time that allows of my writing this.—I wish You could see how very beautifully the sunshine is extending its influence over the green valley before me and just illuminating the sharp edges of the grey Abbey.—You my friend are buried in Sleep, but a Poet’s Sleep teems with Dreams, and you may be getting on in Your way, as well as I am in mine.

“Bath is now very thin.”

[An invitation card “To meet Mr Carlyle” is among the papers, but no other token of that Border-bred raider of Stupidity’s country. Allan Cunningham, his “most dear, modest, kind good-humoured Allan,” however, has left written word of an appreciation of Matilda Betham’s work; “to linger in perusing your Poem was impossible; when I began to read, I read on, & I perused it twice without laying it

down." He concludes a longish letter with the following personal news :

"I have left newspapers & literature & returned to my mason hammers & chizels which I wish I had never forsaken. I am in the employment of Chantrey the Sculptor who perhaps you know. Though as poor as a very Poet, & gray with dust by day & weary with toil by night I was never happier. Oct. 7, 1814."]

*From Mary Lamb to Barbara Betham
at Stonham.*

[The little Barbara was a favourite of Charles Lamb's, and Matilda, with sisterly zeal, noted down one of Elia's comments on the child : that her face "had more cloud and sunshine in it than any he knew."]

"Nov. 2. 1814.

"It is very long since I have met with such an agreeable surprise as the sight of your letter, my kind young friend, afforded me. Such a nice letter as it is too ; and what a pretty hand you write ! I congratulate you on this attainment with great pleasure, because I have so often felt the disadvantage of my own wretched handwriting.

"You wish for London news. I rely upon your sister Ann for gratifying you in this respect, yet I have been endeavouring to recollect whom you might have seen here, and what may have happened to them since then, and the effort has only brought the image of little Barbara Betham, unconnected with any other person, so strongly before my eyes, that

I seem as if I had no other subject to write upon. Now, I think I see you with your feet propped upon the fender, your two hands spread out upon your knees—an attitude you always chose when we were in familiar confidential conversation together—telling me long stories of your own home, where now you say you are ‘moping on with the same thing every day,’ and which then presented nothing but pleasant recollections to your mind. How well I remember your quiet steady face bent over your book. One day, conscience-stricken at having wasted so much of your precious time in reading, and feeling yourself, as you prettily said, ‘quite useless to me,’ you went to my drawers and hunted out some unhemmed pocket-handkerchiefs, and by no means could I prevail upon you to resume your story-books till you had hemmed them all. I remember, too, your teaching my little maid to read, your sitting with her a whole evening to console her for the death of her sister, and that she in her turn endeavoured to become a comforter to you, the next evening, when you wept at the sight of Mrs Holcroft, from whose school you had recently eloped because you were not partial to sitting in the stocks. Those tears, and a few you once dropped when my brother teased you about your supposed fondness for an apple-dumpling, were the only interruptions to the calm contentedness of your unclouded brow.

“We still remain the same as you left us, neither taller, nor wiser, or perceptibly older, but three years must have made a great alteration in you. How very much, dear Barbara, I should like to see you!

“We still live in Temple Lane, but I am now sitting in a room you never saw. Soon after you left

us we were distressed by the cries of a cat, which seemed to proceed from the garrets adjoining to ours, and only separated from ours by a locked door on the farther side of my brother's bedroom, which you know was the little room at the top of the kitchen stairs. We had the lock forced, and let poor puss out from behind a panel of the wainscot, and she lived with us from that time, for we were in gratitude bound to keep her, as she had introduced us to four untenanted, unowned rooms, and by degrees we have taken possession of these unclaimed apartments, first putting up lines to dry our clothes, then moving my brother's bed into one of these more commodious than his own rooms; and last winter, my brother being unable to pursue a work he had begun owing to the kind interruptions of friends who were more at leisure than himself, I persuaded him that he might write at ease in one of these rooms, as he could not then hear the door knock, or hear himself denied being at home, which was sure to make him call out and convict the poor maid in a fib. Here, I said, he might be almost really not at home. So I put in an old grate, and made him a fire in the largest of these garrets and carried in his own table and one chair, and bid him write away and consider himself as much alone as if he were in a lodging in the midst of Salisbury Plain, or any other wide, unfrequented place, where he could expect few visitors to break in upon his solitude.—I left him quite delighted with his new acquisition, but in a few hours he came down again with a sadly dismal face. He could do nothing, he said, with those bare, whitewashed walls before his eyes. He could not write in that dull, unfurnished prison!

"The next day, before he came home from his office, I had gathered up various bits of old carpeting to cover the floor, and to a little break the blank look of the bare walls. I hung up a few old prints, that used to ornament the kitchen; and after dinner, with great boast of what improvement I had made, I took Charles once more to his new study. A week of busy labours followed, in which I think you would not have disliked to be our assistant; my brother and I almost covered the walls with prints, for which purpose he cut out every print from every book in his old library, coming in every now and then to ask my leave to strip a fresh poor author, which he might not do, you know, without my permission, as I am elder sister. There was such a pasting, such consultation upon these portraits, and where the series of pictures from Ovid, Milton, and Shakespeare would show to most advantage, and in what obscure corner authors of humble rank should be allowed to tell their stories. All the books gave up their stories but one, a translation from Ariosto, a delicious set of four-and-twenty prints, and for which I had marked out a conspicuous place; when lo, we found at the moment the scissors were going to work, that a part of the poem was printed at the back of every picture! What a cruel disappointment! To conclude this long story about nothing, the poor despised garret is now called the print-room, and is become our most familiar sitting-room.

"The lions still live in Exeter Change. Returning home through the Strand, I often hear them roar about twelve o'clock at night. I never hear them without thinking of you, because you seemed so pleased with the sight of them, and said your young

companions would stare when you told them you had seen a lion.

"And now, my dear Barbara, farewell. I have not written such a long letter a long time, but I am very sorry I had nothing amusing to write about. Wishing you may pass happily through the rest of your schooldays, and every future day of your life,

"I remain,

"Your affectionate friend,

"M. LAMB.

"My brother sends his love to you. You say you are not so tall as Louisa—you must be—you cannot so degenerate from the rest of your family.

"Now you have begun I shall hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you again. I shall always receive a letter from you with very great delight."

[The Bethams were not over-big according to Westmorland Fell-side measure. Captain John Betham certainly possessed the girth and altitude of the north, at least if a "lytle jape," scribbled in one of his sister's albums just before returning to sea, may be credited. Thus it opens:—

"I'm six feet two above my toes,
My age is over thirty;
Blue are my eyes, straight is my nose,
Sunburnt my face, not dirty:
My carriage good, I'm just the size,
My fame abroad is spreading;
Some ladies can't be very wise,
For I am leaving Reading.

"They say I'm straight, and strong, and tall,
 A model of a figure;
 If smaller, I should be too small,
 Too big, if I were bigger:
 And yet they know I'm taking flight,—
 Packed is my chest and bedding;
 'Tis Leap Year, too, why don't they write
 Before I go from Reading?" etc., etc.

But the Captain was tallest of the eight brothers, the average height of whom probably was not more than five-feet eleven. Nor were they "long" in the sense of lacking breadth. But Lamb, who was very short, made himself the criterion by which he judged others' inches. Mrs. Montague (who by inference was somewhat tall and slender) reversing Lamb's standpoint, rallies Matilda Betham in one of her letters, on being "fat, short, and saucy."]

From Southey.

"22nd Dec. 1814.

"I am glad to see your proposals which look very much as if you were in earnest. Put my name upon your list & put also that of Miss Barker, Greta Lodge, Keswick whom if you had come here as we hoped & almost expected this last summer you would have known & liked.

"I hope ere long to send you Roderick in a more manageable form than quarto bulk. The small edition is in the press.

"It is dismally cold. We are in the midst of storms. I am as busy as possible & in some disquietude respecting the youngest child,—not



ANNE,
Third daughter of Rev. Wm. Betham.

From a sketch.

amounting to alarm—but enough for a constant sense of uneasiness.

“Love from all & believe me

“yrs most truly,

“R. SOUTHEY.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“My Mother sent me the *covers* some days after the Verses, so that they will only leave me to-day.—Do not mind my Opinion, because I am Enthusiastic & partial, but I really think the Poem quite beautiful, and nobody who had not feeling of the most Sensitive kind, could describe so well those of the Guests assembled at the feast. I am much interested about the Minstrel & beg I may hear of her again soon.

“I must now tell you something Odd in as few words as possible.—some weeks ago my friend Mrs English observed from her window a Gentleman waiting & watching in the rain, soon after came a very young Servant Girl & joined him: after a long conference they parted. Mrs E. felt compassion for her. she conceived her a victim fixed upon by this Gentleman, and resolved to rescue her if possible. with this Idea she desired her Maids to give her notice if the Circumstance Occurred again.—it did once or twice, but she was out. At last she saw them meet again herself, and when they parted she followed the Girl at a little distance. She led her thro’ various Streets, then into Laura Place, Pulteney Street—New Sydney Place to No —. Mrs C——’s. Mrs English saw her enter by the Aria, then knocked at the Door, asked for

the Upper Servant and told her apprehensions, the Maid requested most Earnestly that she would Speak to her Mistress. M^{rs} E. did not know her, but the Old Lady was called & heard the whole with great perturbation. she said it was her Daughter's maid, and that the affair concerned more than the Girl.

"Miss C—— was summoned, she entered with defiance on her brow, and in the most impertinent manner, demanded why she was troubled about Such Nonsense. the Maid refused to tell the Gentleman's Name, and was turned away. M^{rs} C. told her daughter she might go up Stairs, to which she replied, "*I suppose I may chuse to Stay*" in saying this she flung herself in the most insolent Manner upon the Couch. M^{rs} E. withdrew. and the Mother & her D. have appeared to be going on just as Usual. I dare say the Girl has persuaded her that the Maid met the Gentleman on her own account tho' M^{rs} C. was told that he was seen receiving or giving a Letter.—some days after this affair M^{rs} English saw the Ladies at the play accompanied by the Very Man in question. he is therefore one of their acquaintance and is carrying on a Clandestine correspondence with the Daughter.—I am sorry for the Old People, but there is no helping them.

"I dined lately at D^r Compton's."

"BATH, Jan 16. 1815.

"I long for the appearance of the Whole poem which I reckon will raise Your literary fame considerably.

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"John has had a lucky Escape. When does his comical Poem make its appearance?"

From Southey.

"KESWICK 2 July 1815.

"I remember that I did not say half as much about your poem as I ought to have said—but this shall be made amends for in proper place, for I like it so much that it will give me very sincere pleasure to say how good it is in a manner that may be serviceable. I do not remember whether I urged you to visit us this year & therefore I write now—a joint impulse of Edith & myself. Come, & the sooner the better. Your poem need not prevent you—proofs travel by post & know their way to this house. It may be some inducement to know that Sir G. Beaumont will be lodging in Keswick.

"Now write & say you are coming—Love from all, & so God bless you.

"Yours very sincerely,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

From Southey.

"KESWICK, July 23. 1815.

"I am the worst *dealer* in the world, and therefore very unfit an adviser in concerns of business. My own books are published upon no better terms than those of sharing profits with the publisher, and I have never yet been successful enough in the sale way to feel authorized in demanding more.

But there has been another cause for this: my hands have been tied more, perhaps, from a point of feeling on my own part than from any actual necessity. You see I am rambling from your concerns to my own; but my statement may serve to show that an arrangement for sharing the eventual profits is not an unfavourable one, and that any bargain which secures to you half eventually, and puts you in immediate possession of any part in advance, may be considered a good one.

"You must see more of the country than you did on your former visit, and therefore I shall delay some purposed expeditions till you arrive.

"Come as soon as you possibly can—before the days begin to shorten too soon for the day's business.

"Love from all,

"Yours most truly,

"R. SOUTHEY."

From Southey.

"15, QUEEN ANN ST,

"CAVENDISH SQUARE,

"7 November 1815.

"I meant fully to have written when we were here on our way to Flanders but was literally unable from the incessant hurry & bustle of business & society in which I was involved. You know what this is, & will therefore excuse an apparent but unavoidable neglect.

"We are once more in town & now I trust we shall meet. Write to me & speak to me at all times with entire confidence. my advice may be worth

nothing, but upon my discretion & the sincere good will with which I shall listen & reply you may rely in full assurance. I hate & distrust professions & therefore never make them, but if you have not found out that I am glad to see you & to hear from you & that I take a proper interest in what concerns you, you must then know less of me & of human character than I give you credit for having.

"I have neither Russian nor Cape interest — but may perhaps make some in the latter quarter when you tell me how it is to be solicited.

"Remember we expect you next summer at Keswick to compensate for this year's disappointment.

"Edith's love.

"God bless you.

"R. SOUTHEY."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"BATH, Oct. 24 '15.

"how kindly Your dear good Father spoke of me. I am sorry I am not to see Your Brother Alfred. M^{rs} Schim is with us for a few days. She is more rational than She was. She inquired after you.

"I have been reading Tweddals Letters, some of them are interesting. he is buried in the Temple of *Theseus*. My Children are well, Fanny still at Ramsgate with the Dowager Lady P. & her daughter, she seems perfectly happy.

"Bath is like a desert,

"Yrs most affecty

"C. BEDINGFELD.

"My good wishes to all Yr Family with kindest regards to Yr Father in which Sir R. joins,"

From the Same,

"Dec. 2, 1815.

"I have been doing a very large drawing lately, an old Subject interwoven with more Dramatic Persona. perhaps You may remember *my fine Lady in the Country*. I have done her again with her Lord conversing with his Gamekeeper and an Old Steward Ushering in two Visitors, a little fat Parson, & the Apothecary. It is one of the largest Drawings I ever did,—I long to see Marie,

"Sir Rich^d desires I will say 1000 things from him. pray give our kind regards to Yr Br Charles."

ROOM XII.

1816.

From Mrs Montague.

"BEDFORD SQUARE,

"*March 2nd* 1816.

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"I saw Mr. Kean last night, and heard him sing, and saw him listen while others sang. — He is exactly described by Mr. Hunt in his delightful poem of 'Rimini':

'Wisdom looked sweet and inward from his eye
And round his mouth was sensibility——'

"When Marie is set to music I shall send her to you,"

From Charles Lamb.

"DEAR MISS B.

"I am sorry to say my sister has been taken with one of her violent illnesses, which was so sudden as to have shaken my health a great deal & made it impossible for me to attend to your letter,

L

I am naturally so indecisive, & this has quite taken, all spirit of resolution from me, that I wish you to consult anybody else as to your notes & appendix & beg you to let me transmit them for that purpose. I cannot give attention enough to judge of them. The plain text of the Poem I will chearfully supervise, but I greatly wish you would relieve me of the rest.

“Yours sincerely,

“C. LAMB.

“*Wednesday.*

“Kind remembrance to all. to Mr Kenny.”

From Charles Lamb.

“DEAR MISS BETHAM,—That accursed word *trill* has vexed me excessively. I have referred to the M.S. and certainly the printer is exonerated, it is much more like a *tr* than a *k*. But what shall I say of myself?

“If you can trust me hereafter, I will be more careful. I will go thro’ the Poem, unless you should feel more safe by doing it yourself. In fact a second person looking over a proof is liable to let pass any thing that sounds plausible. The act of looking it over seeming to require only an attention to the words that they have the proper component letters, one scarce thinks then (or but half) of the sense. — You will find one line I have ventured to alter in 3^d sheet. You had made *hope* & *yoke* rhyme, which is intolerable. Every body can see & carp at a bad rhyme or no rhyme. It strikes as slovenly, like bad spelling.

"I found out another *sung* but I could not alter it, & I would not delay the time by writing to you. Besides it is not at all conspicuous—it comes in by the bye 'the strains I sung.' The other obnoxious word was in an eminent place, at the beginning of her Lay, when all ears are upon her.

"I must conclude hastily,

"dear M, B.

"Yours

"C. L."

From Charles Lamb.

"DEAR MISS B.

"Mr Hunter has this morning put into a Parcel *all I have received from you at various times* including a sheet of notes from the Printer and two fair sheets of Mary. I hope you will receive them safe. The poem I will continue to look over, but must request you to provide for the rest. I cannot attend to any thing but the most simple things. I am very much unhinged indeed. Tell K. I saw M^{rs} K. yesterday & she was well. You must write to Hunter if you are in a hurry for the notes &c.

"Yours sincerely,

"C. L.

"*Saturday.* Shall I direct the Printer to send you fair sheets as they are printed?"

From Charles Lamb.

"I have altered that line to

'That magic laugh bespeaks thee prest.'

"You had better consult Rogers about the *expense* of reprinting that sheet. An erratum there must be about *kill*."

From Charles Lamb.

"D^R MISS BETHAM,

"Your letter has found me in such a distress state of mind owing partly to my situation at home & partly to perplexities at my office, that I am constrained to relinquish my further revision of *Marie*. The blunders I have already overlooked have weighed upon me almost insufferably. I have sent the Printer your copy as far as it is clear to 106 page, "happiness too great for me," is the last line of that page. The rest which I am not in any power to look over being wretchedly ill, I send you back. I never was more ashamed of anything, but my head has a weight on it that forces me to give it up. Pray forgive me & write to the Printer where you would have sent it in future.

"Yours truly,

"C. LAMB.

"I have returned the printer all the copy of the past sheets."

From Charles Lamb.

"EAST INDIA HOUSE,

"*June 1. 1816.*

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,—All this while I have been tormenting myself with the thought of having been ungracious to you, and you have been all the

while accusing yourself. Let us absolve one another, and be quiet. My head is in such a state from incapacity for business, that I certainly know it to be my duty not to undertake the veriest trifle in addition. I hardly know how I can go on. I have tried to get some redress by explaining my health, but with no great success. No one can tell how ill I am, because it does not come out to the exterior of my face, but lies in my skull deep and invisible. I wish I was leprous, and black jaundiced skin-over, and that all was as well within as my cursed looks. You must not think me worse than I am. I am determined not to be overset, but to give up business rather, and get 'em to allow me a trifle for services past. Oh, that I had been a shoemaker or a baker, or a man of large independent fortune. Oh, darling laziness! heaven of Epicurus! Saint's Everlasting Rest! that I could drink vast potations of thee thro' unmeasured Eternity—*Otium cum vel sine dignitate*. Scandalous, dishonourable, any kind of *repose*. I stand not on the *dignified sort*. Accursed, damned desks, trade, commerce, business. Inventions of that old original busybody, brain-working Satan—Sabbathless, restless Satan. A curse relieves; do you ever try it?

“A strange letter to write to a lady, but more honeyed sentences will not distil. I dare not ask who revises in my stead. I have drawn you into a scrape and am ashamed, but I know no remedy. My unwellness must be my apology. God bless you (tho' He curse the India House, and fire it *to the ground*), and may no unkind error creep into 'Marie.' May all its readers like it as well I do, and everybody about you like its kind author no

worse! Why the devil am I never to have a chance of scribbling my own free thoughts, verse or prose, again? Why must I write of tea and drugs, and price goods and bales of indigo? Farewell.

“C. LAMB.

“Mary goes to her place on Saturday, I mean your maid, foolish Mary; she wants a very little brains only to be an excellent servant; she is excellently calculated for the country, where nobody has brains.

“Have you seen ‘Christabel’ since its publication?”

From Charles Lamb.

“DEAR MISS BETHAM,

“I received your present with mixed feelings of gratitude & shame. I look at it set forth so trim & ornate, & regret that I should have shrunk from the task of contributing to its exactness. But you mercy is above my faults. I stole a glance at the Errata & I do not know whether I were glad or sorry that that killing word that must ever stand against my conscience like the handwriting on the wall, did not stand alone. Well, I have nothing to do but to remit my offence as you have done & proceed tho’ unworthy to the Perusal. Thanks again. Mary is middling. I am very so so. Dyer shall have his copy forthwith.

“I remain, dear Miss B.

“Yours truly.

“C. LAMB.

“Hope to talk it over with you soon.”

From Southey.

"KESWICK, 20 *April* 1816.

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM.

"I have no heart to examine and comment on these poems. The heaviest of all afflictions has fallen upon us—after a long illness—a dreadful season of hope & fear—we have lost our dear Herbert. Under such a visitation nothing but religion could support us. Your portrait of him is now become invaluable. His mother has behaved with admirable fortitude. For myself I am shaken to the roots, & suffer severely in body. The mind is as it should be, & I find consolation where only it can be found.

"God bless you.

"R. S."

From Charles Lamb.

"DEAR MISS BETHAM,—I have sent your *very pretty lines* to Southey in a frank, as you requested. Poor S., what a grievous loss he must have had! Mary and I rejoice in the prospect of seeing you soon in town. Let *us* be among the very first persons you come to see. Believe me that you can have no friends who respect and love you more than ourselves. Pray present our kind remembrances to Barbara, and to all to whom you may think they will be acceptable.

"Yours very sincerely,

"C. LAMB."

*To her brother Charles on his leaving England,
by M. B.*

"Thou goest, and I am not near,
To clasp thy hand, and say Farewell!
But hopes, more tender than a tear!
More zealous than my lips can tell!
More fondly hovering than the dove!
Than the harps' tones more highly wrought;
In the deep prayer of ardent love,
In the long dream of anxious thought.
These on thy parting steps attend!
These on thy future prospects dwell;
And, are they not, my own dear friend,
More potent than the word Farewell!"

[Matilda Betham had a great regard for her brother Charles, who, on account of his sterling qualities, she named in her fancy's circle the "Heart of Gold." She had a habit of thus bestowing nicknames on those she knew. Charles Betham is given as being of temper "genial and equable; mind, solid and playful; habits, temperate, correct, and prudent." He married a wife from Norfolk, heiress to a small country estate there, and whose family was identified with the agricultural interest.]

From Southey.

"June 24th

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,—I *ought* long since to have written to you, and thanked you for your verses. [On the death of Herbert Southey.—ED.] I felt them as you would wish me to feel them; but I haven't yet ventured to put them into Edith's hand, and perhaps she had better not see them till they appear in print, when time shall have blunted the edge of

pain. Believe me, I thank you sincerely for them, nor could you have gratified me more. They bear your stamp—the stamp of the lawful mint of the Muses.

“There needs no apology about the “Lay of Marie;” rather, there does need one, but it is on my part, and you will readily excuse me for not having sooner executed my intention. I will certainly write an account of it for the number after that which is now far advanced in the press, but I cannot answer for its insertion; that must depend on the editor. My influence and effort shall not be wanting; and as I have some influence with one other Review, I will lose no time in recommending it there. That stanza in my lay which made you sorry, will make others angry; but the occasion required it. I cannot forgive the Dissenters for leaguings with the Catholics against the Church, the original cause of dissent being that the Church retained too many Popish ceremonies. They have no common principle but that of hatred to the Establishment, and a union formed upon that principle is abominable. But Church and State will be overthrown before this generation pass away unless the Government awaken to a sense of its danger. I suppose I shall be called a Methodist with just as much propriety as I have formerly been called an atheist.

“Love from all,

“God bless you,

“R. S.

“The pictures have arrived.

“Dyer’s picture is a most happy likeness. He does me wrong if he supposes that I do not set great

value upon it, for I have a great regard for him, and so much respect for his better part, that I never lose sight of it even when his oddities and weaknesses provoke a smile. It is melancholy to see so many of the ingredients both of genius and happiness existing in that man's mind, and spoilt in the mixing, and to think how trifling an alteration in his character would have made him as useful as he is good, and as happy as useful."

ROOM XIII.

1818.

[In a letter to Southey, Lamb in 1818 refers with praise to a book of verses recently published by "Mat. Betham." As typical of her lighter style, the following piece is taken from the little book mentioned.]

DAMON: A SKETCH.

BELIEVING love was all a bubble,
And wooing but a needless trouble,
Damon grew fond of posied rings,
And many such romantic things;
But whether it were Fortune's spite,
That study wound his brain too tight,
Or that his fancy play'd him tricks,
He could not on the lady fix.
 He look'd around,
 And often found,
A damsel passing fair;
 "*She's good enough,*" he then would cry,
 And rub his hands, and wink his eye,
 "*I'll be enamour'd there !*"
He thus resolved ; but had not power
To hold the humour *half an hour*—
And critics, vers'd in Cupid's laws,
Pretended they had found a clause,
 In an old volume on the shelf ;—

Which said, if arrows chanc'd to fly,
 When no bright nymph was passing by,
 And lighted on a vacant breast;
 The swain, Narcissus-like possest,
 Strait doated on himself!

If so, his anxious friends declar'd
 All future trouble might be spar'd:
 A heart thus pierc'd would never rove,
 Nor meanly seek a second love;
 No distance e'er could give him pain—
 No rivalry torment his brain.
 Self-love will bear a many knocks,
 A thousand mortifying shocks;
 One moment languish in despair,
 The next alert and debonair.

Poor Damon bit his nails and sigh'd,
 But still he was not satisfied;
 He could not rest, nor be content,
 Until to Cupid's court he went.
 Of rules establish'd in the place,
 Or, how to enter with a grace,
 He own'd he neither knew nor car'd,
 But thought *such nonsense better spar'd*,
 And went undaunted and alone
 To place himself before the throne.
 He kiss'd no hand, he bent no knee,
 Nor measur'd steps of one, two, three,
 But made a careless, slouching bow,
 And said, "Your highness will allow,
 "That I am personable, tall,
 "A rather handsome face withal,
 "And fit to serve as volunteer,
 "At least as any present here!
 "Purblind, and deaf, and long and short,
 "Without distinction here resort;
 "Whilst I, neglected and forgot,
 "Sate daily watching in my cot;
 "And scarcely stirr'd, for fear there might,
 "Arrive that morning or that night

"A captaincy, or some commission,
"For I confess I have ambition,
"And think if none had done me wrong
"I had not been o'erlook'd so long.
"To come then, Sir, I thought my duty,
"Oh! make me sensible to beauty!
"The ice about my bosom melt!
"Infuse a warmth it never felt!
"I come uncall'd! excuse my boldness!
"In truth I could not bear the coldness!"

Half piqued to see him thus intrude,
And question in a way so rude;
Half tickled at the strange address,
Cupid said gravely, "We confess

— "There may be reason in your plea;
"But still we very much admire
"Your entering in such strange attire!
"We cannot such omissions see,
"And countenance—It should appear,
"You know not we are sovereign here!
"The soldiers of our chosen band
"Approach not till we give command.
"We every look and action sway,
"And they with prompt delight obey.
"For height, and size, and such like things,
"We care far less than other kings;
"But station, learning, no pretence,
"Can make us with our power dispense.
"The warrior must not here look big,
"The lawyer doffs his forked wig,
"The portly merchant rich and free,
"Forgets his pride and bends the knee;
"The doctor gives his terrors scope,
"And, like a patient, whines for hope;
"In short the wise have childish fits,
"And fools and madmen find their wits.
"Then go—this silly pride subdue,
"And thou shalt be our servant too!
"Acquire the courtly way of speech,
"Not, 'do you hear?' but, 'I beseech.'

“ And let a suitor’s voice and air,
“ Thy grievances and zeal declare,
“ We never scorn a humble prayer !”
 Expecting then a heart submit,
He held him forth his hand to kiss ;
For petrified the while he spoke,
With troubled wonder in his look
Poor Damon stood ; aghast, suspended,
But gain’d his senses as he ended ;
Abruptly turning on his toe,
“ I thank you, Master Cupid, no !
“ I am a freeman and a brave,
“ And will not stoop to be a slave.
“ Your rules will never do for me,
“ I’d rather learn the rule of three—
“ And since I find it is the plan,
“ To make me an automaton,
“ I’ll case my heart in triple mail,
 “ And fence it so completely round,
“ That all this vaunted skill shall fail,
 “ Those blunted arrows back rebound ;
“ For know, usurper ! from this hour,
“ I scorn thy laws, abjure thy power !
“ From this dear moment I despise
“ The whole artillery of eyes ;
“ Reason alone shall be my guide,
“ And Reason’s voice shall win my bride.
“ Some bonny lass shall say I can
“ Love you as well as any man ;
“ I will the self-same troth accord,
“ Most gladly take her at her word ;
“ And we may just as happy prove
“ Without the fooleries of love,
“ She must not ask so much attention,
“ As many ladies I could mention ;
“ But when I do not want to sway,
“ I’ll always let her have her way ;
“ And study to oblige her too,
“ When I have nothing else to do ;
“ And am not tired, or wish to rest,
“ Or like some other plan the best,

"For, more than this would be a task,
"None but thy votaries would ask.
"She must have riches, beauty, grace,
"And modest sweetness in her face."
Just then he saw a scornful sneer
Upon Dan Cupid's face appear;
While courtiers whispered with a grin,
"Poor fellow, he'll be taken in !
"The finest birds are always shy,
"The rarest at a distance fly,
"And Reason cannot soar so high."
"Aye, you may laugh, to prove her mind
"At once exalted and refined,
"I'll watch her skill in music's art,
"By ear and fingers judge the heart,
"And then it will not be believ'd
"I can be easily deceiv'd.
"I only grieve that in my prime
"I've wasted so much precious time,
"For long ere this I might have married,
"Had I not so unwisely tarried,
"And vex'd my brains in looking round
"For that which never could be found."
"And would'st thou wish," the monarch cried,
"To set our gentle laws aside ?
"Thou hast no friend in Common Sense,
"In such affairs she thinks it wisest,
"To stand aside without pretence,
"And sanction laws which thou despisest.
"But try the plan, it merits praise,
"Success may crown its winning ways !
"The lady must be blind indeed,
 " With whom such offers of neglect,
 " And cool, habitual disrespect
"Would not succeed.
"But come no longer here to flout us,
"Since, truly, thou canst do without us ;
"For dignity is lost in sport,
"An outlaw for contempt of court ;
"We banish thee with all thy pride
"Until thy heart be rarified."

*Hannah More. Excerpt from an MS. Book of
Matilda Betham.*

"Hannah More had none but admirers around her in her own household, and her levy, as it may be called, was attended by all the men of letters in the neighbourhood.

"The primitive names of old times remained with them (her sisters) when I visited them at Barleywood. The red-cluster-rose crept up the rustic pillars which surrounded the cottage they had built, and even ran upon the thatch, and the laurel trees they had planted afforded a pleasant shelter to the little benches placed about and near the urns in memory of Locke (who was born in the village and whose bust was given them I think by Beilby Porteous). Miss Betty I think was dead a little while before. Miss Molly (an infirm old woman who told me she had had a paralytic stroke, pleasing from her unpretending simplicity and her love to her sister) went round the apartments with me. She showed me her sister's picture by the unflattering Opie (the hair was powdered, and the complexion looked I thought darker than when she came home from an airing). She shewed us (Mrs. Schimmelpennick & myself) a beautiful print from it she did herself, and said her sister had been a very fine woman, and exceedingly fortunate in her publications, which had realized £4,000.

"There were two others; Miss Sally, who was stouter than the rest, was apparently labouring under some illness at the time, but Mrs. S. told me she (Miss Sally) was exceedingly witty and cheerful in general. Patty, the only one younger than Hannah,

and as well looking, had a greater delicacy about her than any ; and but for the languor of almost decline would have been pretty. I was told she had a good deal of talent, and had written a work which had it not been been for the superior fame of her sister, she might have contrived to print.

"Of several clergymen who called while we were there, D^r R—— (whose unsuspecting indiscretion in retaining a packet of letters for post which had he gone abroad he was to have taken, caused so much commotion in our royal family) alone staid dinner. I was sorry he staid because I wished to have seen more of the distinguished lady I went to visit.

"I remember her (I think powder was still used) as a fine-looking woman ; in years, but without any apparent infirmity. She had a bright dark eye ; and her manner of listening when you spoke was courteous and attractive,—but a sort of gossiping discourse between her and D^r R—— prevented my having an opportunity of judging what her eloquence might be ; and M^{rs} Schimmelpennicz (or Schimmelpennick—she and her husband spelt their names differently, and I forget which was *her* way) was so eminently gifted in conversation that I felt disappointed, which most likely I should equally have been, had there been a fairer trial of her powers."

Mde de Stael.

From Matilda Betham's Diary.

"She was in discourse like the flow of a beautiful and rapid river. I recollect being so delighted and

rapt that I forgot all the matters and opinions in which we disagreed, and listened to her with unmixed admiration. Great cares, anxieties and excitements of the time would now and then prevent my attention being sufficiently awakened, for I remember her saying once—‘It is very singular, but you appear to understand *me*, and I *you* better than anybody I ever met with ; yet at times I cannot make you out ; I see nothing of your mind.’”

Nautical Fashions.

From a letter dated August 19th, 1822.

“The ‘Royal George’ [George IV.’s yacht at Greenwich—ED.] is a most beautiful Vessel. all the Sailors when we first arrived wore glazed hats with a Crown on the front and a kind of light blue stuff Jackets with white trousers, but before the arrival of his Majesty they changed to White Jackets and Cloth Caps with fronts, being all uniform, and the Vessel so elegant the whole looked superb. We had a most excellent and near view of the King.”

Chevalier d'Eon. From a Note-book of Matilda Betham.

“My mother has often seen her (*sic*) at Mr Fountain’s uncle’s (W. Whitelock Planche), where she was very intimate, stood godfather for his daughter,

and was almost continually with him. They were ridiculed in the Printshops by a caricature drawing of Wilkes, The Chevalier, and Fountain as the Child of Liberty, the mother, and Dry nurse. Fountain was always his great defender and gave my mother a printed paper of French with a translation of the French King's Permission to the Chevalier to return, and a Picture with a character at the bottom.

Permissien accordée par sa Majesté très chrétienne le Charles Genevieve Louise Auguste Andrée Timothie d'Eon de Beaumont Chevalier de l'ordre Royal & militaire de saint Louis, Capitaine de Dragons, aide-de-camp du Marechal Duc de Broglie, ancien Ministre Plénipotentiaire de France auprès du Roi de la Grande Bretagne, &c., &c., de rentrer dans le Royaume de France avec sauf-conduit & sûreté de sa personne.

De Par le Roi.

Sa Majesté s'étant fait rendre compte des différentes commissions publiques & particulières que le feu Roi son très honoré ayeul a bien voulu confier ci-devant pour son service, tant en Russie qu'en Angleterre & autres lieux, A Charles Genevieve Louise Auguste Andrée Timothée d'Eon de Beaumont & de la manière dont il s'en est acquitté, ainsi que des services militaires du dit d'Eon de Beaumont; sa Majesté a reconnu qu'il a donné comme Officier & comme Ministre, en politique, en guerre & dans toutes les circonstances, des preuves non-équivoques d'attachement à sa patrie & de zele pour le service du feu Roi, qui le rendent digne de la protection que sa Majesté veut bien lui accorder, & voulant sa dite Majesté traiter favorablement le dit

d'Eon de Beaumont elle daigne lui continuer la pension de douze mille livres, que le feu Roi son ayeul lui avait accordée en 1766 & qui lui a été payée jusqu'à ce jour, sans interruption.

Sa Majesté veulent en outre que les malheureuses querelles qui n'ont que trop éclaté au scandal de l'Europe, soient à jamais ensévelies dans l'oubli ; sa Majesté impose sur cet article a l'avenir, un silence absolu tant au dit d'Eon de Beaumont qu'à tous autres ses officiers & sujets ; a cette condition, permet sa Majesté au dit d'Eon de Beaumont de rentrer dans son Royaume, d'y rester & d'y vaguer en pleine liberté a ses affaires, ainsi que de choiser tel autre pays qu'il lui plaira, suivant l'option que le feu Roi lui en avait laissée en date du premier Avril 1766.

Sa Majeste voulant en outre que, dans aucun cas, en aucun temps, en aucun lieu, le dit d'Eon ne soit troublé, inquiété, ni molesté dans son honneur, sa personne ou ses biens par aucuns des ministres passés, presents & futurs, ni par aucune autre personne, tant pour les négociations & commissions publiques & secrètes dont le feu Roi l'avait honoré, que pour aucun autres des résultons de ses querelles, démelés & proces, lesquels sont aneantis à jamais par ces présentes, comme il est dit ci-dessus, elle veut bien accorder au dit d'Eon de Beaumont sauf-conduit & sûreté entière de sa personne et le mettre sous la protection & sauve-garde spéciale de sa dite Majesté ; à charge par le dit d'Eon de Beaumont de garder le silence le plus absolu, & de se comporter en toute circonstance, en sujet soumis, respectueux et fidèle ; & pour assurance de sa volonté authentique à cet egard, sa Majesté a signé de sa propre main le présent ordre & sauf-conduit, qu'elle a fait contresigner &

delivrer au dit d'Eon de Beaumont, afin que nul n'en prétende cause d'ignorance, par moi Conseiller Secrétaire d'Etat au département de ses affaires étrangères, & de ses commandements & finances.

A Versailles 25 Août, 1775.

(Signé) Louis.

(L.S.)

Et plus bas signé.

Grairès de Vergannes.

Avec Paraphi & le Sceau aux Armes de France. Collationné, trouvé conforme à l'original, à Londres ce 4 Novembre 1776.

(Signed) LE CHEV. D'EON.

N.B.—Ce jugement rendu par le Roi de France lui-meme, ne fait qu'ajouter encore à l'authenticité de la justice de la cause du Chevalier d'Eon, & devrait ne lui laisser aucun ennemi sous un Regne, où le choix des Ministres semble caracteriser les vertus du Monarque, et annoncer que le citoyen vertueux & courageux est sur de trouver un protecteur.

Character under the Picture.

Chev. d'Eon.

Formerly Doctor of the Civil and Canon Law, Counsellor of the Parliament of Paris, Censor Royal of History and Belles Lettres, Envoy to Russia with the Chevalier Douglas, for the reunion of the two Courts; Secretary of the embassy to the Marquis de L'Hospital, Ambassador Extraordinary and plenipotentiary from France to her imperial Majesty of

all the Russias ; and Secretary of the Embassy to the Duke de Rivernais, Ambassador Extraordinary & plenipotentiary from France to England for the conclusion of the peace.

ROOM XIV.

H. E. I. C.

ONE batch of letters is pasted in a Log Book. Between the letters, here and there, scraps of the old Log are decipherable: they give glimpses on board the Honourable East India Company's Ship, Jane, Duchess of Gordon, during her voyage from England with troops to Madras during Trafalgar year, and a few months after that sea-fight. These glimpses show comedy and tragedy continually blended within the uncomfortable limits of the "Jane."

A large proportion of the troops appear to have been recruits. The mortality among them was appalling, considering that when despatched from Warley or other depot they would have been strong men. Consecutive daily entries of death are many.

For some part of the voyage the Men-of-War, Diadem, Diomed, and Narcissus accompanied the Jane. It was an unsettled time at sea. Entries run, "Dec 30th (1805) At 7 PM. a strange sail S.S.E. standing to the N.E. Man-of-war in chase." "Cleared Ship for Action." But the only actual conflict witnessed on board was between the Captain and Lieut.-Colonel Frome, recorded under date February 25th, 1806, as follows:

"When the Hands were called up after dinner the Officer of the watch requested L^t Brown of H.M. 67 Regt to order the Soldiers to assist in picking oakum. Lieut Brown immediately ordered the Non-Commissioned Officers of the Watch to employ them in that Duty but the soldiers refused being ordered by Lieut Colonel Frome, the Commanding Officer of the Detachment not to pick any more oakum unless they pleased."

To "keep the people needfully employed," during that long and tedious transit was one of the Captain's perplexities. Day by day occur entries, "Exercised the Guns & small arms, the Military with blank cartridge," "Unsettled weather prevented the usual exercise of the Military: employed them picking Oakum," and the like. The Captain of the Jane was subjected to the tyranny of an energetic Commodore who was always signalling. "Tacking per Signal," "Attending the Commodore," etc., became regular notes subsequently to the ship leaving the Cape for the latter half of her voyage. Altogether he must have been rather glad to reach Madras. Before getting there the signalling became too much for him, and he managed, through a fortunate "dying away" of the wind, to give the Commodore the slip, as these diurnal items show:

"In Company with the Fleet."

"In Company as usual."

"20 Sail in Company."

"31 Sail in Company."

"In Company as Days past."

"The fleet not appearing we made sail supposing them to be ahead of us."

"At Noon no appearance of the fleet from the Mast Head."

One of the Stonham brothers, young Edward Betham, whose "gaiety of heart," his sister's affectionate pen records, was an officer on board this ill-fated ship, and perished when she foundered with all hands off the Cape of Good Hope two years later.

The series of letters from the oversea brothers reveal a state of things not at all consonant with the India of to-day. The hardships that had to be undergone in that period of eager fortune hunting were manifold.

Combined with appointment in the Company's service, it was often a practice to take out a licence to trade by sea. One of the brothers, in a letter to his wife, gives some particulars of the chances that surrounded such trading. Writing from Madras, under date 15th Nov. 1818, he says, "I hope the Atlas arrived at the Cape before you left and that you got my letter enclosed to Capt Forbes. . . . Misfortune has fallen so heavily upon me that I shall need a twelvemonth to recover myself in. The Pearl returned from F—— three days after you left, brought me a tolerable freight, and I had again nearly loaded her, when the most furious Hurricane that ever was known here discharged all my hopes. The Gale commenced daylight on the 24th Oct from the N.W. and blew most furiously till about 9 o'clock, the Surf breaking out as far as the Ships, indeed it appeared as if we were going to be swallowed up for the sea rose outside the Beach above the level of the Verandah, and appeared as if the ground under us was gradually settling, the whole bank of sand in front of the House was washed away up to the stone Flags

in about ten minutes, and the surf forced into John's Office through the lower Verandah, why the sea did not come over I can't make out for it certainly seemed much above the level of the land, it was the most awefull and grand sight I ever beheld, but it seems providence had placed bounds to its furious encroachments. The ships presented a melancholy scene not one of them being in a state of preparation, they broke from their anchors one after another, the Pearl was the last that parted, she and other Brig went ashore at St Thoma, (?) and fortunately no lives were lost. At ten o'clock the wind shifted round to the South'rd, and for an hour and a half blew a perfect hurricane, the sea in a moment covered with foam, and the house shaking so dreadfully that we expected it would come down, the front doors burst open, tho' double bolted, all the furniture driven to one end of the room and broken and the room was instantly ankle deep in salt water blown from the sea, and we were obliged to retire into the 3rd room to prevent our limbs being broken—at half past ten it began to moderate, and at 12 we saw a ship dismasted and apparently in a sinking state making for the land, which proved to be the Success, a Country Ship that had left the roads about ten days before for Calcutta, she just reached the shore in time to prevent her from sinking, and in time to save the Crew. of six Ships only three have returned, Viz Castle-reagh, Cornwall, and Harriett—the Charlotte, Country Ship sunk four miles to the south and all hands perished, except one lascar, the Barkworth and Wanstead supposed to have gone down, one Vessel sunk at Cov(?)long, not known what she is, perhaps

the Wanstead. The mischief on shore has been very great, houses unroofed and partly blown down, the railing round the Esplanade, and other places supported by those short pillars of Brick and Chunam (?), have been thrown down in every direction, not a tree on the Esplanade or Mount Road but has been blown down, or its branches twisted off, all the roads blocked up by trees, and hundreds of people killed by the large branches."

In later letters to his wife the same writer says,

"Do you know I have lately heard so flattering an account of New South Wales, or what is vulgarly called Botany Bay, that I half think we had better ultimately settle there, unless you be against it. The Government will give any individual a grant of land, and as many acres as he is worth pounds sterling in any spot he may point out, they will also give him servants to be chosen out from the convicts, for no other remuneration than their food, the climate is something like the south of France, and I understand the society is very good as a number of settlers have lately gone over who form a society amongst themselves,—and indeed the accounts given by the Officers of the 46th Reg^t who are just returned from there, it is England in miniature with a milder climate, and every comfort of life in abundance. Several of the 46th have remained there, and with only a few hundred pounds have large estates and are living in affluence. Mr. Chevalier whose Mother lives at Ipswich has offered to take charge of this, and as the vessel he goes by is a fast sailing Ship you will most likely get it soon.
. . . I have this morning heard that Ceylon is to

be given up to the Company—this will I hope bring my Brig into play—and if Fullerton should be appointed Governor, which I think not unlikely, I shall be provided for. . . . Madras, Oct. 30th, 1819. I am appointed Master Attendant of the place you will recollect Norman used to speak so much in praise of. . . . If you cannot come out with the Normans, get one of the Girls to come out with you : You should not have to pay more than £150 for your passage. . . . It is a¹ very healthy and beautiful country and so cheap that one pagoda goes as far as three or ten will at Madras—the houses I understand cost about 4 Pags per Month—there is not much society except a few Dutch families. . . . it is a place of great trade by which the Master Attendants have always enriched themselves. I have just got the Brig repaired and ready in time—I have re-named her ‘The Escape’—and hope to keep her constantly employed. . . . Strachey and Fullerton fought very hard to get this appointment for me. . . . If you should be able to come out in March, April, or May or even June, you will be little more than three months on the passage and have fine weather all the way. . . . Nov. 4th. . . . I shall go down in the Brig about the 1st Dec^r.—and I shall endeavour to get everything tolerably comfortable against your arrival.”

ROOM XV.

AT OLD BATH AND CLIFTON.

SMALL parts, both in fact and fiction, in the matter of amusement often excel the main ones. This, and the sequent pages, resuscitate a couple of minor characters, Dr. Kurby and Signor Panoli, who of old adorned a corner of the gay circles of Bath and Clifton. They owe their re-appearance on the shadow-screen of the moment to correspondence from their pens being found among the papers of Matilda Betham. The silhouettes here reproduced are taken from an old screen belonging to M. B.

Doctor Kurby was a lively octogenarian. In 1809 he was thus described by a woman's quill: "M^r Kurby, who is a Doctor of Laws, wears long ruffles, a Wig with a queue, and has such strange features and odd manners (the Old beau Stile) that I could hardly help Smiling. I had never seen him before. He received me with a Gallant Speech, introducing me to the Company."



Signor Panoli was an Italian in voluntary exile on account of Napoleon's ascendancy in Italy. Lady Bedingfeld has two accounts of him ; one out of doors, and one within—

“some weeks ago I was at Clifton for a few hours, and going up the Steep Street out of the Abbey Green, I think I met him, so melancholy & woebe-gone ! with his Eyes fixed upon the Ground !”

And,

“I dined lately at Dr. Kurby's. in the Evening the *Signor* came, but I had no opportunity of speaking to him. he played at Chess with M^r Weld. I think he is very well looking, and he seems to take care of his appearance which I think no fault.”



Lady Bedingfeld's lack of opportunity of speech with Signor Panoli presumably was due to the exceeding reserve or shyness of that interesting widower, for, to judge by his friend old Dr. Kurby's comments, Panoli's reluctance to make himself heard was remarkable at Bath and Clifton. The following excerpts from the voluble Doctor's letters give his views upon the Signor's reticence :—

"Poor Panoli is still the same, he sat next to my wife, was as if in a trance & did not speak ten sentences." This proud, disgusting Solemnity on his part," &c., &c., &c.

"I shall say you are infected with Panoli-ism, a most nonsensical stiff idea of propriety & non-propriety, having no opinion of his own, no judgment to discriminate times, places, circumstances & usages of the world—He is a Prude in Breeches, formal & queer—a most frivolous character."



"I rec^d yours of 31st by friend P. really he is the silliest most vacant unobserving man I ever saw: he has no Ideas & is in the clouds."

But Panoli was a friend of Count Alfieri, whom he describes to Matilda Betham as a "tall, fair and well looking man, silentious and proud in company." Doubtless what appeared to the old chatterbox of a Doctor as obstinate absurdity on the Signor's part was really an attempt to be "silentious and proud," after the distinguished manner of the Italian count. It was not in the worthy octogenarian's nature



to understand such repression. Says he in one note :

"We obey by hilarity the dictates of Nature—& neither religion nor virtues are gloomy. . . . I had the agrément of being placed at Dinner next the Charming Miss C—a greater treat to me than the fine Dinner. . . . We are full of routs."

Another letter runs :

"We on the Wednesday had to a sort of State Dinner 14 in all, viz S^r W^m & L^y G—and lovely daug^r about 17 or 18, most agreeable accomplished polite young Lady, handsome & most beautiful Eyes, but her manners exceed those Charms. . . . S^r



W^m a hearty good sort of & a fine grand man, a good estate in Ireland & now at No. 7 on our Crescent—M^r & M^{rs} M. & Dau^r (2 Sons 1 with Wellington, the 2nd recently presented with a Commission Gratis in the Life Guards by their Col^l the Earl of Harrington)

so long as 1790 we got acquainted at Toulouse. . . . Panoli was present and one whose name I did not hear, nor did anyone his voice, being as dumb as Pan. from whom tho' he sat next to M^{rs} Kurby she could scarcely squeeze a Sentence; he had quite the air of a man in a Trance. . . . Here all are Rout mad."

A further letter introduces the Doctor's son-in-law, who was also to become a critic of the Signor. Thus it runs :

"I am to impart a most pleasing Event, which has unexpectedly produced joy and happiness to my d^r wife & myself in which I am sure your kind friendship for us and Dear M^r William, my son-in-law, will most sincerely participate. I had in April and May addressed a request to M^r Perceval the Chancellor of the Excheq^r as a Relation of mine to place my beloved Son in Law our d^r William in one of the public offices under Government, the Treasury as most eligible being peculiarly M^r P's own department: he answ^d me kindly & politely that he w^d with pleasure comply with my request but that there were so many applications to & engagements by the D. of Portland that in the Treasury it would be impossible, and that there was no probability that any opportunity would offer in any other public office of a long time &c but he assured me he w^d *bear in mind* my request. This he has most honourably done, tho' he had given no hopes much less promise: he wrote me word on the 6th Inst Aug^t — 'That he had the satisfaction of informing me that an opportunity had occurred much sooner than he had expected, by w^{ch} he w^d be enabled to place M^r William in *the Treasury* if it sh^d still be an object of my wish to place him in such situation, requesting I w^d let him



know as soon as I conveniently c^d wh^r I was still desirous of obtaining a Clerkship for my Son in Law.’”

“ You will smile at a new fancy of Panoli’s, viz., the setting up for a great Italian Patriot.—A Mr Mandel



published a Tour thro’ Italy —just now an Extract on Naples appeared in the Newspaper. Our friend Panoli took into his head to write a long *Letter of Thanks* as a Neapolitan for the Justice he had done his Country &c &c. He enclosed it to me to correct, I shew’d it to Mr William too while here, and as I

really did not chuse the trouble, nor c^d spare the time I contrived to avoid the Task by flattering P’s *Vanity*, in praising it & saying I could not make any alteration for the better (& partly truth too as Will^m & I agreed) that tho’ the English might not be quite correct as an Englishman would have expressed himself, the Ideas were strong & by attempting to alter in to correct English the whole sentence must be sometimes varied or new modelled, so that much of the force of the original Expression &c w^d be lost.—He seemed much pleased, and it really w^d not have been possible to express the idea so strongly in correct English. . . . Nothing but Routs here.”

*From Signor Panoli. Written from Clifton to
Matilda Betham in London.*

“I go now to tell you a curious story. when I

left you wednesday morning I went to prepare myself for my journey. And I had to pack up my friend Kurby's numerous commissions. All the articles belonging to him were deposited in a tea dealers shop a Mr Russell at Charing cross near the coach office, from whence at 5 o'clock was to set off the very coach with which I was myself engaged



to go. I went to Mr Russell at $\frac{1}{2}$ past four to see if the box was ready, for I had intention to take it with me. But the man told me that Mr William Kurby had not yet sent a parcel of pens, and sealing wax, which by a particular commission to him, he promised two days before to send it to the man, and for that reason *he* (Mr Russell) had not nailed the box. I did not lose a moment to run to the Treasury and fetch myself Mr William's parcel, and after the box was ready I went to the coach office to take possession of my place in the coach; when with my great disappointment the coach was gone; and gone with all my luggage too! It was only 4 minutes past five. You may imagine in what condition I felt myself! There was no other hope or remedy, but to reach the coach (which is the quickest after the mail) with a post



chaise. Fortunately for me, was just passing by an empty one (I believe of return going towards pall mall) I stopped it and begged of the postilion that if he would overtake a stage coach just set off for



Bath I would give him as much as he asked. The man accepted the proposal and taking me in the chaise went on galloping all the way till 2 or 3 miles off London, when we reached the most *impatient* and *disobliging* coach. You see now what we are to

indure for friends sometimes. And that was not my fault, Mr William's indolence, which I ought to have left to fall upon himself. On representing this fact to Dr Kurby, he shewed no concern nor regret on the contrary he scolded me for not having brought Princess Charlotte's portrait!"

From Dr. Kurby.



"Pray is the George Cumberland you mention as Pan's acquaintance the son of the celebrated one? In general I liked His Life written by himself. we may pardon the parts which teem with Vanity, for the real various instructive information it conveys, both political and literary. Tho the father was an universal Genius it does not follow that the son of

R^d Cumberland must be so—our friend Pan however has not much improved from him if he is.—The life contains much useful instruction for young Men going in to the world—I recommended it to Mr Will^m but he sees & hears & believes no sort of excellence or knowledge are to be found out of the walls of the Treasury—I think *entre nous*, the whole Treasury set confined in ideas, in mind &c &c. . . . We are full of Routs.”

Further Excerpts from Dr. Kurby's Letters.

“We have been to several Routs. . . . As to Panoli, he is the most ennuyant being I ever knew; without head intellects information or natural Ideas—& certainly not the Gifts of social conversation: when persons of Sense admire the Sentiments of the Personage, the expression of the Author or the excellence of the Actor or Actress, after a vacant Stare all the remark he has made or is capable of is ‘Oh he is thick shouldered, he is not young,’ or ‘she is too fat, she is not handsome’—Who can hear such with patience? . . . He is grateful for the



notice you *compassionately* took of him. He is a good walking stick enough, & he was in his element sauntering about; the weather was most unfavourable to him, did you thaw his *habitual* ice? The Jugglers amused him. His only observation I have

heard is that y^r Bro^r is a handsome man—stupid oaf to overlook y^r lovely Anne.”

.

“Apropos, my D^r Miss Betham, you modestly attribute y^r victory at Chess to P’s complaisance, now I will conjecture, was it not owing to his distraction? & that distraction to an arrow of the mischievous Urchin shot from Your eyes.”

.

“I c^d joke but dare not!”

.

“Women are Riddles so as I am no conj’urer I will not even guess at future Events. I c^d joke, but am afraid of you, having been so rated in your last.



. . . . Have you met with a celebrated Book called the *Marchioness or the Matured Enchantress*: a horrible picture of depravity and female artifices with a most extensive heinous melancholy ruin of a most happy innocent and deserving family.—is the *sup-*

posed Heroine I hope few such female Devils exist as the one so strongly portrayed in that publication of 3 vol. published by Newman in Paternoster Row. I have not heard who is the Author the Title page say By Lady — but I am persuaded that the Author is a man. I can make out many of the Char^s but I

want a compleat Key of the personages—If you hear pray favour us with it. . . . I have just rec^d an^r L^r from P. full of vanity viz., as to *his Book* his own exertions & Search in Library of Greek & Latin Books.”

“I have written to thank Pan. for the Copy of his Book w^{ch} he sent me. I find his late sensible Lady revised it & that afterw^{ds} it was submitted to Hopwood!”



“P. is very tender and sore about the book he sent us—on its being attributed to his late wife—I make no comment.”

But keep from comment was just what the Doctor could not do: adjectives trooped far too readily to his call. Even the Signor appears to have grown angry at last, and to have fired off a few parts of speech in retaliation. But the little rift was not let widen. Writes the wearer of the wig with a queue:



“I have forgiven Pan. . . . He is now quite recovered & in very good Spirits. Here is my D^r Miss Betham’s good work.”

Further Excerpts.

“Pan. means well, he is naturally obliging & goodnatured : he has sincere regard for us & I am happy at what seems to make him so. I have, so has my d^r wife, a sincere friendly regard for him.. . . We are full of routs.”



From Signor Panoli.

(After the defeat of Napoleon that led to his abdication, and confinement to the limits of the Isle of Elba.)

“As everybody now is going abroad, I should think I and you we will be left alone in England. Even the Kurbys intend to reside in Florence. . . . For my part I shall wait till a definite

treaty of peace is signed, and then go to finish my days where I received them.”



From Dr. Kurby.

“I agree with you my D^r Miss Betham that Mad^e de Stael’s expression was *not very polite* in her char^r of the English Ladies; but I incline to think is in general too true a one, at least in appearance,

from their stiffness, Taciturnity, & supercilious distance in mixt or strange Companies—I own that I always preferred foreign Society to that of England. . . . We went to our last rout on Wed^dy."



ROOM XVI.

A COACHING TOUR THROUGH RAIL- LESS ENGLAND (1826).

NECESSARILY many correspondents and penmen troop past the casements of this house, invisible save to the editor. But Mr. J. Hawker, who filled the office of Richmond Herald, and belonged to the Society of Antiquaries, shall for a brief moment become clear ; he and his wife, and their friends, Miss Johnson and Lady Ford, as, in the carriage of the latter, on the morning of August 16th, 1826, they set forth from Hampstead on a tour. Lady Ford was a connection of the Bethams, and hence the exquisite diary compiled by Mr. Hawker of their adventurous journey came into the possession of Miss Mary Betham. It is a large and ornate record, a book in itself, more illustrative perhaps of the amiable enlightenment of the Richmond Herald than of England. His frailty was a tendency to that vice of his time, punning ; and the undoubted personal dignity belonging to an individual who was part of grand occasions, and "stood by the throne when majesty honoured the House of Lords," becomes in danger of obscurity by frequent passages as laboriously gay as this opening one :

"Left Alfred Place in company with Lady Ford on an excursion to the N. West parts of Yorkshire and the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland. We arrived at Hampstead at 10 o'clock, called in the Well Walk where Miss Johnson joined our party. We hired horses for Barnet. The Ladies were in the Carriage—I rode on the Dickey, and it appeared to be all Dicky with me for we had a *driving rain* the whole way." (The italics are the Antiquary's.—ED.).

What with having to change horses about every ten miles, and the uncertainty as to the stretch and disposition of the next relay of animals upon which progress and ease depended ; and the bustle of the constant traffic ; and the pleasure of new roads and old vistas, the peregrination could not have been banefully dull. Writes the vehicular scribe in continuation.

"We arrived at Barnet at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 11 ; had an excellent pair of Horses furnished by the very civil Landlord at the Green Man. An excellent new Road is made on to the far side of S. Albans for the purpose of avoiding a steep Hill, but every lover of the picturesque should descend the lower road and from thence and from other stations near it, view the Abbey rising in the most stately manner above the Houses, some with red roofs, others slates, aided by fine massy Woods, a clear meand'ring Brook and a Mill—the red Tiles by the opposition of color increase the effect.

"At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 o'clock we arrived at Woburn and ordered Dinner, made our ablutions, and took a stroll. The Church and Tower of Woburn are nearly covered with Ivy and intended I believe all but the Windows to be entirely so, they will soon

look like two large bushy green Wigs. The Tower is entirely detach'd from the Church—I suppose according to the present fashion a deed of separation has been executed, the Tower having advertised that he would not pay his wife's debts, she having absconded from him. Returned to the Inn, sipped our Hyson.

. . (17th Aug.). After a refreshing long Night's repose in excellent Beds we Breakfasted and sallied forth for Woburn House and Park."

The foregoing is a fair specimen of the Antiquary's itinerary. Here is one giving his method of description of the many interiors whereto he brought his exacting optics: "New Drawing Room (Belvoir Castle)—Blue and Gold with a Bow window at the end. The ceiling painted by Matthew Wyatt represents the Heathen Gods and Goddesses. Jupiter is seated on a cloud in the midst of them & instead of being represented as usual with fine black locks and a flowing Beard the Painter has placed on his shoulders the head of the late Duke of York quite bald and not a hair on his chin; he is despatching Mercury on an errand, I suppose to his friend the Duke of Rutland."

He jots down, "On the road to Derby saw a Pedlar who instead of carrying his pack at his back had it placed like Saddle Bags across a Saddle on a very light iron Wheel Barrow with a large Wheel of the same Metal. This he wheel'd with the greatest ease: he deserved great praise for his ingenuity and cleverness." And in post-prandial sententiousness he makes the following small chronicle of his alms:

"After dinner I walked round the outside of the Duke's domain and met a peasant with a Basket on his arm in which were Filberts; he look'd wistfully in

my face : I understood him and purchased for 6d. one pound of his fruit the produce of his small Garden. I asked him if he ever said his prayers ; he answered, "*Always Sir*" ; and pray said I what do you say ? " Why, the Lord's Prayer which Our Saviour taught us."

Myself.—"Do you say any more ?"

Peasant.—"O yes Sir. I says anything else that comes uppermost."

Myself.—"You should say the General Thanksgiving for the benefits you have received."

Peasant.—"Why Sir, as for that, I do not know the benefits in these times."

I gave him an additional 6d. *as a benefit*."

As an instance of a coaching tour's occasional lapse from charm, this embittered excerpt stands as record :

"We did not find the Inn at Bradford the most cleanly, and one of the Ladies although it was in the month of August found it very *Nipping*, she was the sleeping Partner and was, as is often the case in forming bad connections, *preyed* upon. Left this *lively* Inn at 9 o'clock. Entered Mr. X——s grounds, passed through an avenue of Trees to his House : the former appear to be much neglected, the latter is large and square, the front is in the wrong place ; it should be turned to the right, opposite a Valley. Leaving the House on our left we entered a charming Wood, on our right a small Rivulet leaping down the slope ; we proceeded to a gate to quit the premises when a Grim Gamekeeper, Jailor-like refused *to let us out*. . . . I returned to Mr. X's by the carriage Road about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a Mile. I enquired for Mr. X and, was told he was gone out ; another footman made his

appearance, I told him who I was; he said he would send after his Master. . . . At length a door opened, and therefrom enter'd a short, aged, punchy Gentleman with my Card in his hand. This was Mr. X. I told him the dilemma we were in. He said people were not to pass through his grounds without his leave, which he granted only to his friends.

"I assure you sir," I said, "we should not have trespassed had we known that such was your determination."

Mr. X.—"Those people at Bradford ought to know that no person can pass without my leave."

[I was very much nettled at being thus obliged to parley with such a Churl yet I wished to get through the Gate].

"Sir," I replied, "had I seen any person at the entrance of your grounds at your first Gate I should have asked whether we could pass. If the answer had been Nay, we certainly should have proceeded by the Common Road."

Mr. X.—"What Inn were you at at Bradford?"

Myself.—"I do not know the sign, but it was the best in the place."

Mr. X.—"Aye! Aye! the — I suppose. Did the Landlord say you might pass here?"

Myself.—"No, the head Waiter told me that his Master had leave from you."

Mr. X.—"Those Waiters are impudent Fellows."

Myself.—"I have the pleasure of knowing some Gentlemen in Yorkshire, and one of them perhaps a friend of yours, Mr. Lister Parker——"

Mr. X.—"Yes, I know him well. You have leave to pass through *this time*."

I returned him a very cool thank you."

An ancient manifested to the Herald the vigour of the Border :

"Early this morning I left the Inn for the purpose of seeing Langdale Pikes which I had so often admired at a distance. I passed over the Rothay and Brathay Rivers & soon overtook an old Man. He was upwards of 80 Years old yet with the assistance of a stick he stump'd on till I was fain to cry, *Hold, enough!* He kindly undertook to escort me, for he was a Langdale Pike Man. After some four miles we ascended a steep Road where the Old Man completely breathed me. "Why Sir," said he, "you do not seem accustomed to our Hills." . . . "Wh . . . y n.o go . . . d Ma . . . n," said I, "I re . . . al . . . ly mu . . . st st . . . op ti . . . ll I ha . . . ve recov . . . er'd my W . . . ind." When we reached the summit I seated myself on my pocket Companion the Camp Stool to make an attempt to make a Sketch ; my old Man seemed quite surprized to see the Mountains growing under my Pencil on the Paper & wish'd he could do the like but thought it like conjuration.

"He said there had been a small Estate in his family which he ought as next-of-kin to have enjoyed but the possessor left it to a stranger in Blood who had humbugged him ; but, said the old Man, "I have in consequence worked for my bread and have done well. Whereas my dispossessor squandered everything and is now a Beggar. I am therefore most thankful to the Almighty for I might have done the same." When we parted I begged his acceptance of a trifle for his trouble ; he refused, for he was greatly pleased he said, with having been useful, and expected no reward. Saying good-bye, I took him by the hand and shook an honest one with great pleasure, but he

squeezed me with his iron fist till I had nearly begged him to desist."

"Restorers" were busy in their own way—not the Antiquary's—at that time in England, and more than once distressed him. The sequent account of the improvement of Baldock Church furnishes an instance.

"Changed horses at Lower Caldicot and proceeded to Baldock where we dined. I took a walk to the Church which was undergoing repair alias disfigurement. I found the Director General, the Church Warden, giving orders to his Men, he seemed to be full of consequence and quite pleased with his job. He eyed me as I advanced, and upon my expressing a wish to see the interior of the building, immediately conducted me into it, looked at the alterations and then at me and so on alternately with a simper expecting I should *extol his taste*. As he had so readily undertaken to be my guide I certainly did not lavish that abuse on his work which it richly deserved, but I did venture to say that I thought the carved Oak Screen, &c., would have been better in its natural color or state than painted white picked out with black. "Why Sir," says he, "it was so dirty and dull, and now it looks quite fresh and lively." Thinks I to myself, your ideas my friend are too fresh and lively. The whole of the interior was made fine after the same manner.

Said I, "The Tower of your Church is large and very handsome but pray how came it you placed such a strange Steeple with such a *pretty Gallery* round it on the top of the Tower?"

Churchwarden.—"Why, surely Sir, you must admire it, we think it the greatest ornament of the whole."

"I think you have quite bedevil'd the Town by it."

Churchwarden.—"Pray Sir did you notice the Steeple as you descended yonder hill, *how beautiful !!!*

"Indeed I did and wished for a couple of pieces of ordnance to blow it to atoms."

Churchwarden.—"May I beg the favour of your name, for I fear we may be shown up in the Newspapers and I should like to know who wrote the article."

"I have no objection to give you my name, but you may depend on it I shall not attempt to injure the fair fame of the Baldockers."

Things were more actual in those days: the spread of education had not rendered it in the power of Dick, Tom and Harry to interpret on a sign-board the lettered abstract of a "Red Cow," "Sun-and-Whalebone," "King George" or "King William," or any of the multitude of veritable things that served for title to wayside houses. Nor had visible winged telegraphy yielded place to the mystic wire. Mr. Hawker and party did not have the landscape cut up and framed in regular compartments by an unceasing continuity of melancholy poles. They sent their messages differently then:

"The morning raining I jumped into a London Stage (at Welwyn) instead of undergoing a wetting on the Box of the Carriage. When we arrived at Barnet I observed that the Coachman was presto quick begone from the box into the Bar of the Inn. Ah, thinks I, you are eager to meet the eyes of your beloved, the *spirited* Betty. Yet I thought it strange that the Landlord and Landlady should pop their noddles betwixt them. The Riddle was soon solved, out came Coachee with a couple of Pigeons in his

hands, a paper was fastened under the wings of each, and off they flew with the intelligence of the winning Horse at the Doncaster Races."

With a fine sweep of his pen the returned pilgrim concludes on September 20th :

" Thus ends a Tour, delightful for Pictures, Houses, Abbeys, Castles, Monasteries, Waterfalls, Mountains, Statues, Lakes, Vallies, Rocks, Pleasure Grounds, Rivers, Churches, Cities, Towns, Manufactories, Parks, Caves, Mines, &c., &c., &c."

ROOM XVII.

HOW THE REJECTION OF THE REFORM BILL WAS RECEIVED AT DERBY, 1831.

FROM the Diary of Miss Emma Betham: "Oct 7th. I found myself at Derby at the King's Head with my brother W^m. & his wife and daughter, at half-past two in the afternoon—dined at 6—and about 9 o'clock heard of the rejection of the reform bill by the House of Lords, soon after which the bells of St. Peters &c rung a muffled peal & people began to congregate about the market place at about ten o'clock I heard a man passing by leading a large mob exclaim "now my lads for Bemroses," soon after which we heard the clatter of glass and exulting shouts of the mob: they continued there for some time and then went further off but we still heard the breaking of windows and tremendous shouts, and the market place was full of people seemingly very busy at destroying windows, the bells all this time ringing a muffled peal till twelve o'clock when I heard no more of the bells, and the town seemed much quieter tho' still in some commotion at three o'clock they came into the market place again & then they set about the work of destruction in greater force and more savagely, as the noise was very much greater and the shouts more

vociferous. They began by singing God save the King and then after a great shout I heard so tremendous a clatter that I thought the houses were demolished. A little after four o'clock they again left the market place & the shouts subsided into a shrill whistle now & then which continued at intervals till daylight: a vast quantity of women and children were in the crowd.

Sunday, Oct 8th.—The mob, whom the day light appeared to quiet a little, were assembled in the market place—the Mayor issued papers “requesting the mob to be quiet till proper methods were taken to enforce the Bill” &c. and sent the Town Crier about to assemble the Authorities at the Town Hall to deliberate on the best means, but nothing that we could hear was effected. At about ten o'clock they broke into the town Jail and liberated the prisoners there (I am told there were not more than seven or 8)—they then made an attack on the county jail, but Eton the Jailor, after warning them to keep off, fired and wounded three or four, & one mortally, which made them desist for the time (but I have since heard they made another unsuccessful attempt). During breakfast the waiter told us that they had the preceding ev'g gone in a body of some thousands to Markeaton the seat of Mr. F. Mundy, the late M.P., and destroyed his windows and done much mischief, and also to Chaddesden the seat of Mr. H. S. Wilmot where they heard they had done £400 worth of damage. At eleven o'clock my brother & his wife & child started for Matlock and I followed them in a fly out of the town. On my way I saw the devastations the mob had committed the preceding evening and a distressing sight it was. Mr. Hope's house was not

only with its windows broken but the frames broken in, the iron palisading torn up &c &c there were several houses in nearly the same plight in the market place. Bemroses, where the Anti-reform petition was lying for signatures, was entirely defaced, and the contents of the shop lying in fragments in the market place. Mr. Johnson, surgeon, also suffered. Abbot of the Royal oak ditto—Mr. Eaton surgeon (who had written to Lord Londonderry) was one of the first who suffered in property—in the defence of which he wounded some one of them with a sword which perhaps may lead to discovery. I pursued my brother's carriage as far as Mr. Charles Hope's, which appeared to have not a pane left whole, and then I took leave of dear W^m. Bess & Nicola, and returned with a heavy heart via Chaddesdon which presented a distressing spectacle, every window seemed not only broken but *pounded*. M^{rs} Wilmot told me that in the first alarm, which was given by two kind men who were strangers, the nurses started up, called her, & each seized one of the children, but she was horrified to find the youngest baby was left, she went in to the room & snatched him out & as she was shutting the door it was clapped to by a large stone with great violence, so had she been a moment later she & her poor baby might both have been killed or at least wounded severely by the blow. They were battering at the window she said for two hours, and at length left them with no room which was not open to the air—the shutters were broken to shivers, and they found one of the great garden chairs which had been thrown through the library window, lying in the middle of the room.—They were singing on first coming up 'God Save the King,' and, after every

volley of stones which came incessantly, they uttered the most tremendous and fearful yells of delight. Mr. Wilmot attempted to address them more than once, but the moment they heard his voice they sent volleys of stones in at the window. So he was obliged to desist—they attempted to break down the front door but that was too strong for them. During the whole time it was almost pitch dark, and they were afraid to light candles lest they should direct the mob where to find them. There were shouts heard of “drag him out” and “murder him” &c &c but those were chiefly from the boys attending them; there were also a large proportion of women: the mob altogether amounted to 3000. After they had quite satiated themselves they left the place, but had not proceeded far before they met another mob, equally numerous, on their way to Chadⁿ for the same purpose who were very importunate with the first to return and help them to “*finish the work*” but they said “they had done enough there for one night” and were impatient to return to Derby. I arrived at Shipley just as they had finished dinner: Walked to church; in the evening the Admiral and Mrs. Wilmot arrived—we had a strong guard round the house and within it, in case they should come to Shipley, and Mr. Mundy never went to bed.

“10th Oct.—On the morning of the 10th we heard of riots at Nottingham and at post time Peter (the postman) brought word that they threatened a visit to Shipley that night, he heard it from above thirty of the mob in the market place at Derby, and Mr. Mundy had other intelligence to the same purpose, in consequence of which we had all the colliery & house carpenters at work to barricade the windows

and doors and remove the pictures, hang feather beds over the pier glasses, and in short to put us in a complete state of defence, which was done in a very short time, and a force of special constables colliers &c., well armed, was in requisition all night, besides horse patrols who went constantly between the lodges to give the first warning of approaching danger—our defenders had each a white badge round the left arm—Admiral Mundy's man met with one of the emisaries of the mob who took infinite pains to assure him 'that they had no intention of coming *that* night and that we might go to bed in security, but that they would *certainly* be with us early the next day or the *next* night and that they intended to level Shipley with the earth &c; he w^d stake his existence on the truth of what he alleged &c., & besides he told him 'that the soldiers in Derby were coming round to the side of the mob and that they walked about the market place with tears in their eyes, and asking '*what* they should do? &c, and that he had himself gone with the mob beyond Chadderdon on its way to Spondon & that they were going to destroy the windows & pull down M^r Roger Coss' house, and M^r St John's, & four places there, which would employ them all that night, and *certainly* w^d be with us & make sad work the next day' & that they had given old M^{rs} Love of Locho their word & promise that they would not touch Locho, as she had harangued them from her carriage and told them that she was and always had been for reform, that she w^d have all the gates in the park off their hinges that they might meet no obstruction and that she would have sticks &c laid along the road for their convenience

&c.' When he talked of the depredations to be committed at Shipley he pretended to be much hurt & ready to cry over it, and in short so worked upon William and all here almost that they were ready to give credit to every word he uttered, which we have since proved to be false in *every respect*. Mrs Mundy proposed their all having white badges round their arms that they might know friends from foes, so as Leedham had not enough stuff for more than sixty or seventy, she sent for thirty yards of white calico from Heanor— at seven o'clock all the preparations were completed, and as we sat down to tea Mr Whinfield came in with his double barrel gun & shot belt: he had sent his wife coild & servants to Mr Roy's, and Mr Hamilton went to guard them—I cannot answer for others but *I* was heartily glad to see him, as I looked upon him as one of the most stout hearted characters I had ever known: he cheered me with an assurance that it was his opinion that with the strong guard, fire arms and defences in every way that we had, we could keep out *all Derby* if they came, which he felt assured they would *not*:—his prognostications were correct, for they did not come that night, nor did they the next day as their emissary had threatened.

" 11th—news reached us on the 11th that Nottingham Castle was burnt & that Colwich also had been set on fire but w^d not burn, both of which were correct; and also that a body of ten thousand men had attacked Wollaton and were pulling it down &c which was incorrect, as they only burst the grand gates at the lodge & got in about 500 of them, when a troop of yeomen who were in the stableyard

sallied out & charged them, when they took to their heels & it was *sauve qui peut*—sixteen prisoners were taken, among whom was a Frenchman with *lots* of money in his pockets and a gold watch—he offered *any* sum as bail but we heard it was refused. There was a rescue attempted in the market place when the regulars were conveying the prisoners from the barracks (where the troop of yeomen deposited them) and the Colonel shot a man who they say was a special constable and not taking any part in the row; but it is surprising that every individual who has been wounded or killed as foremost in the mob either at Derby or Nottingham, has directly been said to be innocent, and to have nothing whatever to do with the rioters—Capt Godfrey Mundy called from Markeaton & dined with us: he amused us with the account of the attack on Marton they knew nothing of the rejection of the bill & had just gone to bed when the mob came up singing Rule Britannia: he thought at first it was the servants who were getting noisy, but as it approached nearer he went to the window to see & was instantly saluted with a pale which they had broken & shyed at the window: he said that he had the command of the defences & would not, as there were ladies in the house, allow the servants to fire, who were very anxious to do so—the mob broke every window & almost every door too; they broke off the head of one of the iron gate posts which by his account must have been more than a foot in diameter, and banged it through the hall door: he said Mr X—— was walking about in his night cap making ludicrous faces with his jaw dropped & his mouth wide open (not appearing

however the least frightened). After dinner we all went down to Beardsley's to tell him of the mob at Wollaton which we expected (& which had it succeeded there I believe intended) to favour us with their next visit.—We returned, hoping that Mr M. on his return w^d bestir himself more than B. seemed inclined to do; accordingly he came home from Derby, where he had been to the meeting of magistrates, and reported that all was quiet there, and he sent off a messenger to Wollaton to learn to a certainty how things were going on—he returned at ten o'clock and told us that all was quiet, but that the castle at Nottingham had been burnt Colwick set on fire & *sacked* & Mrs Munster frightened *to death*, which however is not quite true, tho' she is *very* ill in consequence of her alarm—the mob also burnt a cotton mill at Beeston to the ground, belonging to a Mr Lowe—they say that the workmen might have prevented it, had they pleased, but they were reformers, & w^d offer no opposition, so that they have to the number of two hundred thrown themselves out of employ, and they will of course be the greatest sufferers as the county will have to remunerate Mr Love—Mr Whinfield came again to tea & I was very glad to see him tho' my fears are considerably abated.—I hear & believe it is true that after the burning of the mill at Beeston they proposed going to Chilwell and burning it, with the body of poor Mr Chorlton who died on Saturday, but that a gentleman on horseback who heard of their intentions galloped to Chilwell and sent all the mourners to a place of safety & the body to Attenborough, where it was buried yesterday or to-day.

"12th—Mr W^m Sitwell called to say that all was quiet towards Nottingham, Derby also quite tranquil.

"13th—Miss Sitwell called and went round to look at our *fortifications* and approved them highly, as well as the armoury.—Mr Hamilton came to tea, seized by the watchers on his return.

"14th—All still quiet. Miss Radford & Miss L. R. called and looked at our defences.

"16th—Mr Wilmot came to breakfast ; his watchers had called him up at two o'clock in the morning in consequence of hearing shouts, the bugle &c, but it turned out to be the boatman on the canal : however it proved that the village was on the alert as a hundred men were with him in five minutes.

"17th—M^{rs} Wilmot & children returned to Chad-desden. Mr Charles Sitwell breakfasted & shot here : he also had heard shouts in the evening of Sunday & supposed them to come from Belper but all was perfectly quiet there, we hear, so it was some drunken frolic.

"18th—Derby Quarter Sessions. heard that 36 of the Nottingham rioters were in custody—*not one* at present in the Derby jail. Mr Eaton the jailer thanked by the magistrates for his spirited defence of the jail. Mr Mundy returned home at half-past ten o'clock. All perfectly quiet & people beginning to mend their windows. M^{rs} M. of Mar'ton went to Chadⁿ to look at the depredations there : declared it to be a twin brother to Markeaton.

"19th—Sergeant Gribble called on his way from Clumber where he had been a week on duty.—24 pieces of cannon there ; the mob constantly attempting an attack but retreating into the woods as soon as the yeomanry made their appearance :

they however succeeded in spite of the latter to fire a shed with a cow in it & that is all the mischief they effected ; unfortunately no prisoners have been taken.—Mr M. at the Sessions and slept tonight at Chaddesdon, all idea of the mob coming here being given over.—God grant we may not be mistaken !”



FREDERICK BETHAM.

From a sketch.



ROOM XVIII.

[BETWEEN the years 1818—30 an interval ensues in the correspondence. A general breakdown of health cut off Matilda Betham's literary and artistic prospects: she gave up her house, and left London for some years. But the evening of her life was lit by the old friendships.]

1830—1849.

From Lady Bedingsfeld to Captain John Betham.

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN BETHAM,

"Your Dear Sister will be sorry to hear the sad, sad change in my destiny! but I will not dwell on my griefs. [Widowhood and death of her daughter, Lady Petre.—ED.]

"I hope your venerable Father enjoys good health, pray let me hear.

"I have been for *many months* residing in the convent of Nuns at Hammersmith, they take Boarders, and after my heavy tryal, I felt this place suited me better than any other.

"I am going out in a few days for a week, after my return, if you find it convenient to call, I should be very happy to see you at any hour between $\frac{1}{2}$ after 2

and 8, we dine at two, and the doors are shut about 8. The Convent is in Kings Street, Hammersmith, No 5. I am at liberty also from 11 till $\frac{1}{2}$ one."

From Southey.

"KESWICK, 20 Sept. 1830.

"MY DEAR MISS BETHAM,

"You have been often in my thoughts.

.

"We have had our afflictions also, & severe ones, since you & I saw each other: & time has laid his hand upon us. I am now a grey headed man, elderly enough to be thought old by those who are in the prime of life, & to feel myself on the verge of old age. My three surviving daughters are no longer girls; & my son is in his twelfth year. Cares and anxieties do not diminish as we advance in life—they are only changed or modified in their character & object,—but the end of them seems nearer & is more in view.—I have my share—but am thankful for the blessings that have been bestowed on me, & for having found that "there is healing in the bitter cup!"—

"My wife & M^{rs} Lovell desire their kindest remembrances to you all. M^{rs} Coleridge left this country *twelve* months ago when her daughter was married to her cousin Henry Coleridge & is now with her at Hampstead.

"God bless you my dear Miss Betham,

"yours very truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

*From Lady Bedingsfeld to Matilda Betham
at Stonham Aspoll.*

“CONVENT, HAMMERSMITH,

“28 Sept. 1830.

“MY DEAREST MATILDA,

“If I did not look beyond this world I know not how I could have supported my heavy tryals, more particularly the last.—My remaining Children are well. Henry has married & has 2 children a Boy and a Girl. Matilda has 6 little Girls and one Boy. She is well and as lively as ever, Agnes has two Boys. Charlotte is quite happy in her Convent at Bruges. Charles is grown up and has been some Years in the Austrian Service, but is grown tired of it. Felix has Commenced the Law Career at Lincoln's Inn.

“You did not send me the drawing You talk of, nor do you mention the friends You are with. I suppose it is somewhere in Your neighbourhood. I shall be very glad to hear from You again with some details of Your respected family. how many Brs & Sisters have You and Where are they?—has Yr Father his health? pray remember me most kindly to him.

“You may continue to direct to me here. it is a Convent of English Benedictine Nuns, driven from Dunkirk during the last french revolution, their Convent burnt, and every thing taken from them, few of their original set are now alive, but others have joined. the present Lady Abbess is a Selby of a very Old family in the North. She is a most delightful person, and though I did not know her till

I sought a Shelter here, I have attached Myself extremely to her, her kindness has soothed many an agonizing hour.

"I have not Yet quite determined where to fix My future residence. I incline to Norwich. the Queen (whom I have known these 13 years) has given me, quite unsought, a place in her household, which I have accepted because I love and esteem her. this will require My attendance at certain times for a Month, but I can go from Norwich when My duty calls as well as from any where else, and My heart Yearns towards the Scenes of My happy Childhood, and the Society of my dr and Sole remaining Brother. —adieu my very dear friend—how often have I thought of You. remaining ever, Yr unalterably attached,

"C. BEDINGFELD."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"I am much attached to the Queen, & to her Sister the D. of Saxe Weimar, and warmly interested about the Young Princess Louisa, her daughter, whom I have known from her Birth (15 years) I was 6 weeks at Brighton with her in the autumn, and the other day the Queen wrote to me to spend the day at Windsor which I did. the poor dr Princess is fast declining but is cheerful and works. her afflicted Mother seemed to like me to talk about her, and if they should wish me to go again I think I had better remain within call. 3 weeks must I think terminate her helpless existence, pain Thank God she does not suffer.—I send this through Lord Stafford."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“CONVENT, HAMMERSMITH,

“10th Nov. 1830.

“I have amused Myself the last 4 years with Modelling in Clay and have found it as amusing as drawing. I model from fancy, and when abroad an Artist got them baked for me, and then they would stand any atmosphere. I have done one Saints' head for the Convent lately, but I know not where to have it baked, so I have painted it, and it seems to be as hard as a Brick. I got the Clay at a Pottery near Vauxhall bridge.

“I had the pleasure of seeing Your Brother John some time ago, he is a fine Military looking Man. Age has improved him I think, and he is as pleasant & good humored as ever. he told me about his daughters, but does not seem inclined to live at Chepstow. I should think a gayer place more suited to his taste.

“You do not seem to know that we have lost poor Frederic Dillon. his Sister Maria died also about 4 years ago: she had married, and survived the Duke de Croÿ Dulman.—Charlotte is very happy and very lively, and as I did not allow her to enter the Convent till she was of age, she has of course since taken what engagements she thought congenial to her taste.

“M^{rs} Parke (formerly Betty Beck) is my M^d and begs her respects to You.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

“CONVENT, HAMMERSMITH,

“May 30th 1831.

“I am very glad You are comfortable in Your Cottage. I think I shall take a small house on this side of London. I am obliged to attend all the drawing rooms, but I do not mix otherwise with the world than my duty to my Queen obliges me.

“I dine at half past one, not with the Nuns, but with the Chaplain, and 3 other Ladies who board here. one of them paints most beautifully in miniature.

“It was 9 years yesterday since my dear Brother Edward died! what sad & mournful Events the last ten Years of my life have witnessed. those ten years were just about to Commence when we last met! What will the next ten be?”

From the Same.

“Is Your former publisher alive? or have You formed any new Connexion in that line? — I live a very retired life generally speaking and hear of nothing that is going on. My Children are all well at present. Henry at Oxburgh with Lady B.

“Mr John Bedingfeld (that was) is now Sir John. the King bestowed the Guelphic order upon him, in honor of his having saved his father from Insult & perhaps Death. he is very much broken, but looks noble and well with his ribbon & Star.

“If we met what a deal we should have to talk

about ! a whole generation has grown up since I saw You last, and how many gone !

"You would find me much altered. My face much thinner and drawn, figure, I think, much the Same. I shall never wear colours again ! I feel a Melancholy Satisfaction in confining Myself to Black and grey. I think I shall never have courage to commence Solitary housekeeping. — if You come to London I can explain all this to You, better than I can write it.

"pray remember me kindly to Your Father."

From the Same.

"I have just read Your Note, and feel quite vexed that You should just be in town while I am obliged to be absent. I am just returned from Norfolk, and am going to Windsor to the Q. on Monday. Could you come to see me on Sunday. any hour would suit me — there are *Omnibus*' coming at all hours.

"Your most affecty

"C. BEDINGFELD."

Writing to Southey on Jan, 25, 1832, Matilda Betham says :

"My father has gone to town. He is in his 83rd year, but looks uncommonly well.

"Is Hartley or Derwent married yet ? I have occasionally seen some of their poetry in Magazines but never met with them—indeed I never meet with any one now in that line excepting Bernard Barton whom I saw half a year since in Woodbridge."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"WINDSOR C,

"October 17, 1832.

"I feel greatly disappointed that every circumstance seems to militate against our meeting. I do not leave the Queen till the Court moves to Brighton which will not be till about the 8 of november.

"if You remain on in Town I think I could have You in the Convent for a week as my guest.

"Write to me here, and if You please You may distinguish me from my daugh^r in Law by styling me Hon^{ble} Lady B. the King having last Year granted me the same precedence as if my father had lived to have his attainer taken off — put Windsor Castle—not Palace."

[The Jerninghams had recovered the old family Barony of Stafford.]

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"CONVENT,

"14 Nov. 1832.

"Lady Abbess will contrive to let me have the room I mentioned for You on Wednesday (that is to say) tomorrow Sennight for a week, and I hope nothing will prevent Your coming. we shall then have time to talk over many things."

From the Same.

"CONVENT,

"Dec. 1, 1832.

"I heard from Oxburgh to-day the funeral took

place on Tuesday. it arrived on Monday and was met by my Br and his Sons, the road and park were crowded with people, great numbers in mourning. the Coffin was carried up the Chapel followed by the gentlemen of the family 10 in number, the Sobbing and crying among the people was quite distressing, the Organ meantime was playing a Slow Dirge. after which the Miserere was chaunted and all retired. the Ceremony took place next morning at 9. When the Coffin was lowered into the Vault (which is under the Altar) all the Sons & Sons in law went down and laid flowers on the Coffin.—My 3 Sons then came away.—it is but (?) since she herself walked down into that vault, and laid some flowers on the Coffin of her little girl Mary who died many years ago : its awful door was then opened to receive Edw^d Jerningham's little Boy, her *grandson*."

From the Same.

"CONVENT,

" 14 Dec., 1832.

"The Convent has been to You like the citadel of Antwerp, but a breach is made, and I can give You a Bed within the Walls, Sunday night, Monday night, tuesday Wednesday night—come at any hour You please, but remember we dine at half past one,

"Affect^y thine,

"C. BEDINGFELD."

From the Same.

"March 11, 1833,

"Did I tell you that the group of my "*Poor*

Soldier" with his 2 children is sold in *small* in the Bazaars, with Richter's name as the painter, and published by Ackerman, & engraved by Daw. I sent to Richter to come and look at it. he s^d he knew nothing of the matter. *I* don't care, only they might as well have given me the credit of the composition.—I heard lately from our friend Miss Wodehouse. Lord W. is still living and very well for 92. they live at Hingham."

To Miss Mary Betham, from Charles Lamb.

"June 5, 1833.

"DEAR MARY BETHAM,—I remember You all, and tears come out when I think on the years that have separated us. That dear Anne should so long have remembered us affects me. My dear Mary, my poor sister is not, nor will be for two months perhaps capable of appreciating the *kind old long memory* of dear Anne.

"But not a penny will I take, and I can answer for my Mary when she recovers, if the sum left can contribute in any way to the comfort of Matilda.

"We will halve it, or we will take a bit of it, as a token, rather than wrong her. So pray consider it as an amicable arrangement. I write in great haste, or you won't get it before you go,

"*We do not want the money*; but if dear Matilda does not much want it, why, we will take our thirds. God bless you.

"C. LAMB.

"I am not at Enfield, but at Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton, Middlesex.

"Miss Mary Betham,

"27, King Street, Cheapside,

"or to the care of Sir W^m Betham,

"Dublin."

From Charles Lamb.

"Aug. 23, 1833.

"DEAR MISS B.—Your bridal verses are very beautiful. Emma shall have them as here corrected, when they return. They are in France. The verses, I repeat, are sweetly pretty.—I know nobody in these parts that wants a servant; indeed I have no acquaintance in this new place, & rarely come to town.

"Never trouble yourself about Dyer's neighbour. He will only tell you a parcel of fibs, & is impracticable to any advice. He has been long married & parted & has to pay his wife a weekly allowance to this day, besides other incumbrances.

"In haste & heart-ake,

"Yours

"C. L."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"CONVENT, 16 Oct. 1833.

"There is a Young Nun here who is Solicited by her Sister to sit for her Picture. I recommended Your friend Mr Fancourt, but I could not recollect his address, and after the family was gone it came into my head that *you* who used to succeed so well in

miniature might do it, but you must be my guest during the time, which I suppose You would object to, finding everything here so bad & uncomfortable! —I could get You a bed out, which would remove one objection I suppose. pray let me hear what You think. The nun is Miss Constable g^t granddaughter of L^d Nithesdale who escaped from the Tower the eve of his Execution through the ingenious courage of his Lady. Miss Constable is young & good looking & I think you will be amused doing so new a *Costume*."

From the Same.

"Dec. 26. 1833.

"I went with L^d Stafford to make You a Visit, we were a long time before we found out the Vicarage house (Islington.—ED.) though it is visible enough, but we drove a good way beyond it, and I did not know the proprietor's name.—I left my Card with my Brother's.

" . . . about 'Clope' and 'Cardinal'—I shall answer like the Princess Augusta to her little Niece of Kent.—*that* is a Cloke,—*and what is a Cloke?* —my dear a Cloke is *THAT*.—I may add that I believe a 'Cardinal' is a Short Cloke, or tippet with a hood as worn by Cardinals."

From Charles Lamb.

"I return you, by a careful hand, the MSS. The domestic half will be a sweet heir-loom to leave in the family. 'Tis fragrant with cordiality. . . . Did I not love your verses, have I ever failed to see

that you had the most feminine soul of all our poet- or prose-esses?"

From the Same.

"D^R MISS B.

"I have had a letter from your sister Mary, and come to town on Monday next in consequence. I shall take an early chop in town, & will call upon you about 2 or 3 in the afternoon. My poor Mary is terribly ill again.

Yours,

"C. LAMB."

To Miss Mary Betham.

"January 24, 1834.

"CHURCH STREET, EDMONTON.

"DEAR MARY BETHAM—I received the Bill, and when it is payable, some ten or twelve days hence, will punctually do with the overplus as you direct. I thought you would like to know it came to hand, so I have not waited for the uncertainty of when your nephew sets out. I suppose my receipt will serve, for poor Mary is not in a capacity to sign it. After being well from the end of July to the end of December, she was taken ill almost on the first day of the New Year, and is as bad as poor creature can be. I expect her fever to last 14 or 15 weeks—if she gets well at all, which every successive illness puts me in fear of. She has less and less strength to throw it off, and they leave a dreadful depression after them. She was quite comfortable a few weeks since when Matilda came down here to see us.

"You shall excuse a short letter, for my hand is unsteady. Indeed, the situation I am in with her shakes me sadly. She was quite able to appreciate the kind legacy while she was well. Imagine her kindest love to you, which is but buried awhile, and believe all the good wishes for your restoration to health from

"C. LAMB."

From Lady Bedingsfeld.

"Feb. 8, 1834

"I felt much vexed when I came home the other Night and found you had been here!—Lady Abb. says you looked well.

"I was at St James' all Tuesday. I dined with their Majesties, a very comfortable Small party, only the Household. Yesterday I went to town again to make some purchases for the approaching drawing room.

"It is one of Capt Betham's daughters I suppose that is married to the curate. When you write next to your good worthy Father pray remember me particularly to him."

From Matilda Betham to her Mother, on the latter's birthday, February 23rd, 1834.

I call'd thee *Gertrude* in my early life,
Because it meant the *faithful*; and, as wife
And mother, 'twas deserv'd—for toil and care
Almost beyond what frame and mind could bear,
Were often of necessity thy lot;
But, as they flitted by, thy heart forgot

All weariness, dejection. That is past !
Repose and comfort come, I hope, at last !
And in the birth day cup I now shall pledge,
Bending, with serious thought, to kiss the edge
Which separates the parting year from one
On which arises a much brighter sun ;
I almost think that I can see a dawn,
From which the angry clouds are now withdrawn ;
That have assail'd us. Restoration sweet
Of all the absent ! We again shall meet.
And still I hope the pleasing task renew !
That of this happy day we all shall view
Many returns ! Dear Mother, as we drink
Thy health, we talk of thee, and fondly think
Of times gone by, and of a speedy meeting ;
Of tender wishes, converse, smiles and greeting !

[Mrs. Betham in 1834 was 81 years old, and her husband the erstwhile Poplar-planter 85. A sketch of him about this period, other than the one reproduced in this book, portrays him by his fireside, happy enough, and with books and papers strewn about the floor ready to his hand ; and his folded legs still showing the old fashion of stockings and knee-breeches.

Their eldest son, William, had settled in Ireland, having been appointed Ulster King-at-Arms. He carried with him oversea his attachment to his native county, and also its good-nature. At a time of much political friction, despite his Protestant principles, he lived notably popular with his poorer neighbours, and on the occasion of O'Connell's commotion was saved from insult when accidentally caught in a mob, by the recognition of some members of it, who shouted, "That is Sir William Betham, the poor man's friend !" whereupon he

drove away "amid cheers." A quainter token of the regard in which he was held is given by the following letter sent to one of his sisters :

To *Miss Bethum,*
5 Percy Place.

MISS BETHUM MADDAM.

i was grately sarved by Sur William Bethum onse and i am thankfull for it this is to inform you that there is a plan laid to rob your house i was asked to join in it but i would not. have a sharp look out

Your wellwisher

J. M.

24 July 1837

When visiting London he would frequently renew his acquaintance with Suffolk, for in addition to the ties at the old house at Stonham, he possessed fresh ones at Theberton, his youngest daughter being married to Mr. Hardinge, its rector.]

From Lady Bedingfeld.

CONVENT, *Ap.* 19. 1834

"I have to propose to You, to come here next tuesday and Stay over Wednesday.—I hope to enjoy some comfortable chat with You. I returned here on Wednesday. all the court left Windsor on that day.—I had to attend the drawing room on thursday which fatigued me, though it did not last very long."

From the Same.

"CONVENT. *April* 26 '34.

"I joined the 7 other ladies who attended the Queen, about $\frac{1}{2}$ 6. and we set forth in royal state

in 9 carriages. I went with 3 gentlemen. they, all in Uniform, and with their different Stars, looked very magnificent. the Ladies were also, much adorned with Plumes &c. 2 Ladies were in the King's Box, the rest of Us were in the one next, with Several Gentlemen. there was sufficient applause, and all within and without went off well. the procession of the royal Carriages must have looked very splendid to those who were not in them, I could only see it sometimes as we turned from one street to the other.—there was a place next St Martin's Lane where some *hissing* & *groaning* was heard, an Old gentleman with me, said he had been with George 3^d & 4th and in that narrow street the *same discordant* sounds were always heard!"

*From Miss Sibylla Betham, daughter of
Capt. John Betham.*

" NORWICH,

" Sept. 18th 1834.

" MY DEAR AUNT.

" I am doubtful if I may have time to finish this letter as we are preparing a large party of nearly 60 people to be given by Mr Nichols at Harriette and my special request. On Monday we walked to shop and in the evening I rode out with Mr N. and then went to Mr K——'s to tea ; he is the handsomest man in Norwich : his mother is a very nice old lady but strange to say his sister, though good-natured, is as plain as he is otherwise. There we met Henry Bellman, son of the clergyman at Helmingham, and the old doctor of that name who resides at Earl Soham. We then walked to see the

Gasometer and were very well amused at seeing the process of gas making. On Tuesday a M^r Watson who once lived at or near Stonham, and knew Grandpapa, came to play chess. On Wednesday we went at four o'clock to a *dejeunè a la fourchette*. Our dresses were plain white muslin with bows of white satin down the front, white capes to match, and our straw bonnets trimmed with lilac gauze ribbon. Our party consisted of M^{rs} Stanford, M^r N., Harriette, and myself. When we first went in there was a kind of ante-room with a military band performing different and very pretty pieces of music. Then we proceeded to another department where there were three long tables covered with luxuriant fruit and different garlands of flowers, and also with more solid things. Later, after all the company had assembled we adjourned to the ball room where we were soon joined by the different beaux of the evening. The waltzing and galloping was very animated and pretty.

"On Sunday we are off to Yelverton not without many regrets at leaving the pleasant & agreeable society of our uncle.

"S. B."

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"CONVENT, Dec. 1. 1834.

"My cold is so much better that I hope to get out in 2 or 3 days. I am rejoiced to hear such a good acc^t of your Father.—when I can call upon you, I will let You know the day before that he may give me the meeting."

From the Same.

"1836.

"let me hear what You determine that I may see that Your room is made comfortable. Edmund J. & his wife, and her Sister Miss Waterton, & Clementina go on board the Steam boat at twelve tonight at tower Stairs, to proceed to France and on to Milan. My poor Charles will be delighted to see them, and as his Cousin Gen: Swinburne is Governor of the town, and very kind to him, it will also be agreeable to the travellers. I almost wish I was of the party.

"I saw my G^d Son Henry Petre today. I had not seen him for more than 4 years. When he first entered I saw something of his dear mother, but it Vanished and returned no More!"

From the Same.

"CONVENT, Jan. 28 1837.

"I have not been out since you saw me. . . . I have had all the School children to breakfast, 5 at a time, and they have invited me to breakfast with them on Monday. they have a 'liberty day.' . . . Mr Fraser is made an English peer which offends the 'Times' paper, and the abuse is well taken up and ridiculed in the Morn^g Chronicle."

From the Same.

"1837.

"*I am* come home from the Country but am going to Lady Wellesley at Fulham and tomorrow and Monday I dine & Sleep out.—I wish you could

have come oftener during my long confinement at home for invitations pour in upon me now, most of them I would gladly refuse, but get entangled ;—on Thursday I am to be presented, and I have an invitation to the Young Queen's Ball on Monday."

From the Same.

" CONVENT, *Feb.* 14, 1838.

" I have had staying Company and you know very well that when I have a friend in the other arm Chair, I do nothing but talk & listen.

" I have been much entertained reading the Life of Walter Scot. how amiable and unaffected he was in private Society. I have also read 1st volume of the Memoirs of Geo 4th Supposed to be written by Lady Ch: Bury, then Lady Ch: Campbell. it is curious to me having known so many there mentioned. I feel in reading it as she says she did sometimes ready to cry for the poor Prs of Wales treatment. at other times completely out of patience with her, for her silly imprudent Conduct."

From the Same.

" 1838.

" I was last Night at the Ball at Buckingham Palace. The Young Queen danced a good deal. if she were taller, & less Stout She would be very pretty. I did not Stir out on the Coronation day, but we were very merry at home, the School Children running all over the House to see what they could see, and Older ones like Myself caught the infection. we had also a partial Illumination but the trees in



MATILDA BETHAM.

From a pencil-sketch.

full leaf hide the greater part of the Convent from being seen.—our opposite neighbour attained to *V R* more or less brilliant.

“If you knew how strangely different English People are Sometimes abroad, You would not pass judgment upon foreign nations from the acquaintance you have made with foreigners in England.”

[The Miniature here reproduced has the following history :—The Queen went to the studio of Sir William Ross to view some of his work. Mr. Albert Beetham, who held a Court office (Adjutant H.M. Hon. Corps of the Gentlemen-at-Arms) being present, and expressing his admiration of this especial one, among several miniatures of Her Majesty, she then and there presented it to him, graciously pressing her private seal upon the back, there being wax, but no pen at hand.]

From the Same.

“MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,

“*Sept. 12.*

“I have been ‘*in waiting*’ on the Queen Dowager since the end of August & stay till the 30th of this month. this has hurried me about and prevented my writing to You, but I have not felt less interested about Your *Play*.

“The poor Princess Augusta is in a dying state but better they say today. the Queen Dow has been backwards and forwards from Bushey to see her and has generally been admitted. She was so bad the night before last that the Q. slept at Marboro’ House, and we are still here, though there is but one sitting

Q

room to be in besides the Queen's private drawing rooms,—and on the day the Queen suddenly determined to remain in Town I *dined* with her on tea & bread & butter & cold chicken. the Cooks &c &c were not here, and now they are come we are in a Scrambling way. no Lady but me & only 2 Gentlemen. the poor Prs Augusta quite herself. adieu my dear friend, ever truly Yours,

“CH. BEDINGFELD.”

From the Same.

“I was amused with your Letter, which I read within the Old Walls that Cradled me!—My Brother & Georgiana asked kindly after you, and heard with Interest that you were *occupied writing*.

“I passed 3 days with our old friend Miss Wodehouse at Hingham. Her Br W^m is Rector, and has an amiable family of Children, so that she has Society, and very pleasant Society, from them.—we talked of You and old times.

“My month of attendance on the Queen Dowager was a Melancholy one, from the Illness & death of the truly amiable Princess Augusta. the Queen was much attached to her and was continually going backwards & forwards to see her, at first from Bushy and latterly from Marlborough house. if her Majesty had gone Sooner to Sudbury (the place She has hired) I should have accompanied her. The Abbess begs her kind regards.—and I remain dear Matilda
Your sincerely attached

“C. BEDINGFELD.”

From Lady Bedingfeld.

"CONVENT,

"August 21, 1839.

"Is it Autumn, is it Summer?—I let the Vine Shoots cross my South Windows, preferring the Shade of green leaves to that of dingy Blinds, but I am every day tempted to cut them away."

From the Same.

"Jan. 23rd 1840.

"You know how my day passes and how little I do!—I read your Letter with pleasure and felt pleased that you were at Your Brother's farm.

"The Queen Dowager sent me a magnificent twelve Cake for the Nuns. I never saw any so beautifully ornamented. *It lay in State* 3 days.

.

"Your attached

"old friend

"C. BEDINGFELD.

"You took me
for better & for
Worse years & years ago."

From the Same.

"March 18, 1840.

"I am sorry for poor Southey, but trust he will get better. I did not know that Mr. Dickens was in that way.—Persons with vivid imaginations, and acute Sensibility are more liable to these maladies than the Stupid and Obtuse.

"I am writing this with a new sort of Ink, it runs much more freely from the pen, and turns black they tell me."

From the Same.

"11th Jan. '42.

"I think of going to Cossey in a few days and when I return You must cheer me up with another staying visit, Lady Abbess and I laughed over your humourous lines."

From Lady Bedingsfeld.

"July 22, 1843.

"You had better stay and Unpack Yr *goods*. I am ordered to go to Luncheon on Monday at *Bushy*—My Queen is still very weak and does not dine with her Ladies, I think therefore that this Luncheon will be her *Dinner* as it will be mine but I shall be home by 6 o'clock therefore if you like to come on Monday Even^g or Tuesday Morning I shall rejoice to see You—be governed by your feelings, rain & wind included.

"most affectionately Yours

"C. BEDINGFELD."

The following verses give a brief self-portrait of Matilda Betham, when a year or two past the Psalmist's three score years and ten. They were found in a Note-book :

"Much have I lost! yet I retain
Enough to sooth my heart and brain,
Affection's wand has double pow'r
When round it countless graces flow'r!

Though Age advances, strength decays,
Enjoyments come a thousand ways—
The bending trunk of Life's old tree
Still blossoms forth abundantly !

The morning calm ; the evening bright,
In social converse takes its flight ;
And of the hour when Death draws near,
I have no present care nor fear !

How grateful I ! The healthful glow
Of zeal and ardour yet to know—
To relish wit, love goodness still,
Come in what way or shape they will."

1848.

A daughter of Lady Bedingfeld, writing to one of the nieces of M. B., said :—" Though years have rolled away, I have a perfect recollection of the affectionate intimacy that existed between your aunt and my lamented mother. A little observation (in a published biography), tho' a trifle of itself did not fail to strike me as contrasting her elderly appearance with that of her youthful, comely days. The allusion referred to was her bleached hair protruding in somewhat manly fashion from beneath her cap, and recalling to my memory the great pleasure it used to give my sisters and myself to be permitted, by her habitual good-nature to plait her long luxuriant hair, according to our juvenile taste, it being then of a pretty light colour."

" Misfortune and disappointment had no power to sour that sweet temper or embitter that genial mind. She was every whit as bright and beaming in her old age as in her fêted and flattered youth, and to the

last loved her books. In some of these was written : 'Matilda Betham, with Charles Lamb's old love'—and such friendships were indeed her title of honour.

"Her declining years were spent in London. At certain literary gatherings of a past generation, the old woman who was wont to enter leaning on a stick, her face beaming with animation and intelligence, was usually surrounded by a little court. 'I would rather talk to Matilda Betham than to the most beautiful young woman in the world,' said one of her youthful admirers of the other sex in her old age; and those who listened to her bright sallies, her piquant stories, her apt quotations, forgot that she was no longer young." From account of Matilda Betham, in "Six Life-Studies of Famous Women."

PART III.

A WOODBRIDGE PROSPECT.

WOODBRIDGE, before the artificial beach had been invented on one side of its tidal river, and the crack of the golf stroke startled the rabbits on the other, was a dream-laden place, full of sweet idleness in itself, and fringed with heaths beyond, away right to the waves.

At that time the stout trim sails of the "Bernard Barton" schooner, at regular intervals in the calendar were to be observed speeding up or down the pleasant reaches of briny Deben; and the equally buoyant old gentleman from whom it took name might likewise have been noticed silhouetted against the sky as he perambulated along the summit of the river wall that winds past blue-bell woods and marsh-meadows towards where the Martello-Tower at Bawdsey Ferry gives earth a full-stop. Despite temptation to wander, the jovial Quaker seldom strayed far from Woodbridge.

Barton was a banker, but had a sparkling eye, and the dignity that emphasized him was not rooted in business austerity. A disciplinary section of the Quakers regarded him with a suspicion bred of his rhymes, that reached even to the "Mr" on his brass door-plate, and to an embroidered waistcoat he took

to wearing, both of which carnal indulgences he vigorously and triumphantly defended. But to what dilemmas he was occasionally thrust through belonging to George Fox's persuasion the letter to Matilda Betham makes plain.

Barton holds a peculiar niche in literary regard in that his personality is interesting, not by what he himself wrote, though he was a voluminous author, but from the original work he won from contemporaries. He for long has enjoyed a quiet but secure immortality as one of the correspondents of Charles Lamb; and now seems destined to achieve a like cherishment as the crony of FitzGerald. The sequent excerpts possibly merit the indignity of being labelled "Family Gossip," yet nevertheless, since the gossip became Edward FitzGerald's wife, they possess some gentle interest. With the exception of the one from her father dated 4 mo. 7, 1845, that is as FitzGerald inserted it in his Memoir of Barton, they have not been printed.

*From Bernard Barton
to the Misses Mary and Emma Betham.*

"WOODBRIDGE 5/4/42.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"Emma says I owe her a letter—so this must stand for an answer to it, tho' began in the plural—because I look on you two as one, inasmuch as what is written to either is most likely to be read by both—But now for business—My Brother & Lu's Uncle, tho' a Gentleman & a Philosopher, is a Man of business too, sometimes of his own,



REV. WILLIAM BETHAM.

Aged 83.

From water colour sketch.



sometimes on behalf of others. The more's the pity—as it always makes his visits flying ones—To think of you in the innocent simplicity of your spinsterly hearts keeping away from Woodbridge lest you should rob Lu of his company—Why, he came by the Coach one evening, and went away by the Coach next morning—He does not often, I own, serve us so shabbily—but on this occasion an appointment in Town connected with business of some importance in which he was involved as a Trustee, compelled him to be more brief than usual—and so he came and went, like a flash of lightning—But tho' he is gone, and the Coast is clear, Lu hopes you will not come till Tuesday, on your Eyke expedition, for Isabella Fitz Gerald came back to Boulge yesterday & booked Lu to go and spend Monday with her at Boulge Hall—and Lu says she should be very sorry for you to come thro' Woodbridge, & make even a short call there, when she is out. On Tuesday she will be at home & happy to see you for a call on Y^r way Eyke, for a visit on your way home. So come as early in the day as you can, get thro' your Eyke business as quickly as you can, and then give Lu as much of your company as you can, on your homeward route.

“Yesterday was the day fixed for the Sale of M^r Hardinge's Land near this place. M^r Cowell of Saxmundham, Henry's Lawyer, was at the Sale. He had a letter from Henry *yesterday morning*, giving account of Fanny's health,

“With love from us two to you two,

“Your affectionate friend

“B. B.”

"WOODBRIDGE 5. 4. 42.

From Bernard Barton to Matilda Betham.

"4 mo. 7. 1845.

"L. is gone to a concert, and, truth to tell, I was sorely tempted to go myself: but it was to be performed at the theatre—rather an un-Quakerish locality; and, as J—— and A——, though tempted like myself, seemed to think it would not do for them to go, I, who have less music in my ear, though I flatter myself I have some in my soul, could not with decent propriety be the only Quaker there. But I had a vast curiosity to go; for it is not an ordinary concert, but performed on certain pieces of rock, hewn out of Skiddaw, which struck with some metal instrument, emits sounds of most exquisite sweetness. We have heard of sermons from stones, but I never dreamt of going there for music; but we live in a wondrous age for inventions of all sorts: so I, for one, by no means despair of seeing a silken purse made out of a sow's ear, in defiance of the proverbial wisdom of our ancestors."

[“Mr Hardinge,” mentioned in the following letter was the Rev. Henry Hardinge, rector of Theberton, a place not far from Woodbridge. He had married Fanny, the youngest daughter of Sir William Betham.]

*From Miss Lucy Barton to the Misses Mary
& Emma Betham.*

"WOODBRIDGE, January 14th 1848.

"This is the very *first letter* that I have written this year, and for much longer than that

even, I assure you : and, I believe, my silence has arisen in great measure, from a full mind. Don't you know that if you are very busy *thinking* you may sit with a person by the half hour together and not be aware that you have not spoken, till reminded of your silence—so it is with me I think. But you have recalled me to speech, and I hasten at once to tell you that this letter was planned in my own mind to be written this very night.

“ You may remember that I told you in the summer, when I had the pleasure of seeing you, that I did not think my dear father at all well, and that Mr Jones suspected some affection of the heart. I have taken no notice of it to himself, but Mr Jones and I have been watching him, and we are convinced that it *is* the case, and I feel quite sure that the symptoms increase upon him. But do not you take any notice of this when you write, for there is no need to make him nervous about himself, and he could not fail to see your letter. He has been poorly for the last few weeks independently of this, I think, but is better to-day, I hope. He still continues to take pleasure in a little letter-writing, but he rests more than I ever knew him to do before on the sofa, and lets himself be lazy, which I encourage as much as possible, so I think fewer letters get written. All these little proofs, either of advancing age, or decline, go to my very heart sometimes ; but it must and will be so, and perhaps it is selfish to feel it so keenly. Do let us hear from you again soon.

“ How I wish we could drop in upon each other, for I see nothing does my father more good than a chance “dropper in.” Is it *impossible* that you should drop

down here upon us? I do not like to plague you about it, because if it *is* impossible, it must only bore you to mention it, but if it *is* within the bounds of manageability you have only to say the word, and glad should we be!

"I met Mary Emma Lynn at dinner at Foxborrow, at Mr Charles Walford's last Monday, and her brother the Major, and the W^m Woods. Mary Emma is going to Norwich tomorrow week to hear Jenny Lind sing: she, Mary Emma, made many enquiries after you. I *must* say good night now. Do let us hear soon for I am anxious about you. You are so kind to every body else that I am sure everybody else should think of and care for you. If you don't write a line soon I shall soon direct another sheet full to you from,

"LUCY BARTON."

"WOODBIDGE,

"*September 1st* 1848.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"Seeing that I have no preserves of my own to sport in to-day, I will e'en send a shot into your covers; not however with the intent of making *game* of you, my desire being only to summon you to a little pleasant chat!

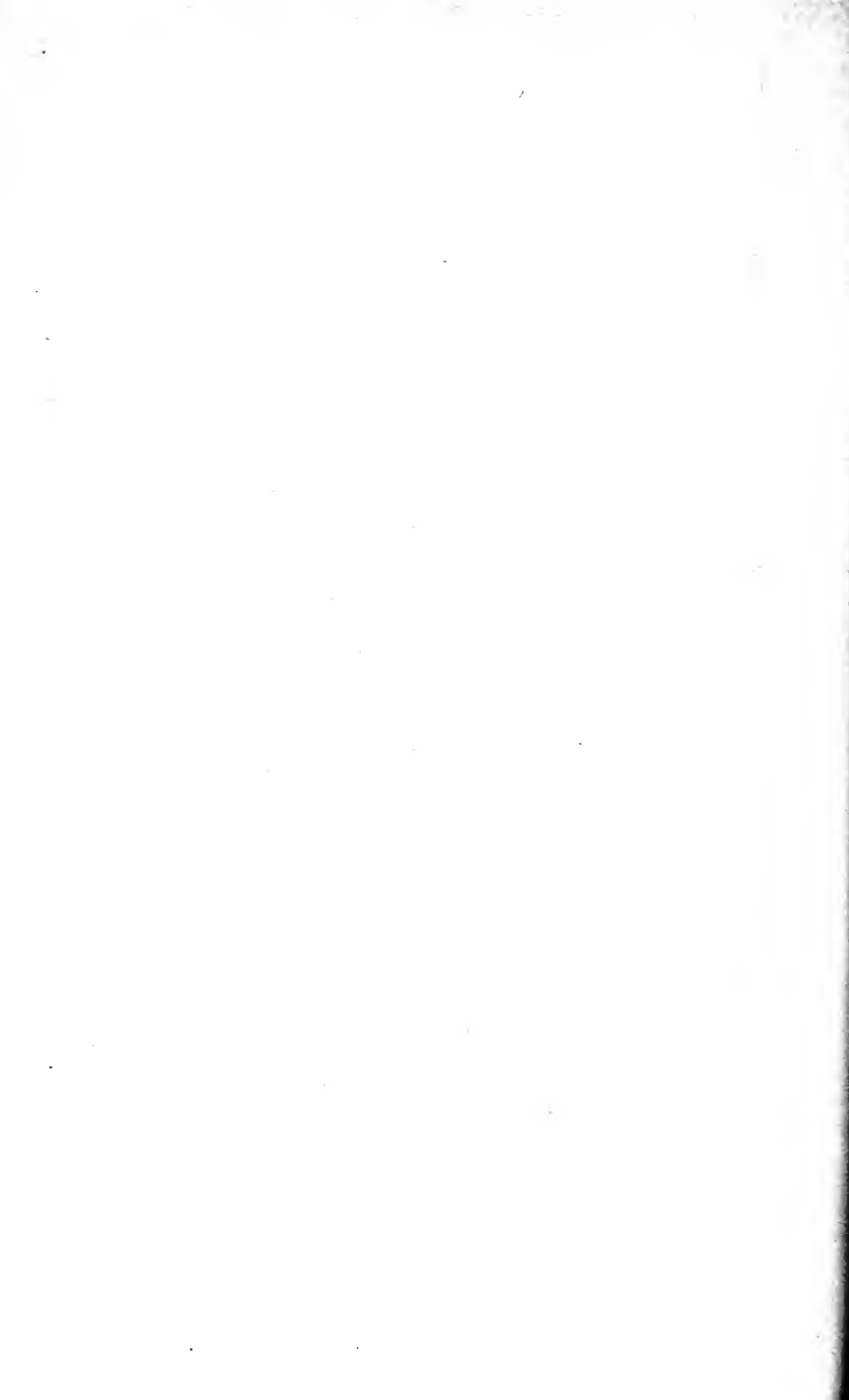
"I should have liked being with you at the Temple church, though it was so 'hot,' for it is a place I have a great desire to see. We have had a pleasant little visit from my cousin John and his friend Mr Brightwell, they took us on their way into Norfolk, and they seemed to enjoy it very much: we took a voyage down the river, in a nice large sail boat which was an amusement much to their



MRS. BETHAM.

Aged 77.

From water-colour sketch.



taste. How I wish either of our London friends would give us a sight of their faces here ! Have you heard from Mary Emma Lynn that her aunt Lady Frazer (?) has lost her only remaining son, Augustus ? he died of cholera at Antioch, and the news came from the English Consul of that place to W^m Wood.

"We *have* read with the deepest interest the 'Final Remains'—and awful as are the disclosures we feel that it was due to Elia to make them, for they furnish the key to his whole character, without a knowledge of which we could never have known the beauty and self-devotion of that character ! How touching was the love of the brother and sister too, knit together by such a bond of dependence and protection.—I have only time to send kindest love from both of *us* to both of *you*. And now I must make the tea : how I wish you were near enough to step in and take a cup with your ever affectionate friend,

"LUCY BARTON."

From the Same.

"AT MR. EDWARD CANDLER'S

"BAWBURGH

"NORWICH

"April 24th 1849.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"I think I told you that I had been advised to make a Selection from my dearest Father's Poems and correspondence for publication, to be accompanied by a Memoir & Portrait. This has occupied me much for we have given his poems a very careful

revision, & selected such only as seemed likely to be of general interest. I have been fortunate enough to recover some delightful letters that he has written to different people, some excellent ones to M^{rs} Shawe, some serious ones containing his opinions on serious matters, & some of a more social kind from M^r Donne that he had kept, & some to M^r Crabbe, more of good fellowship. I wish to give a *true picture* of him to the world, and it cannot, I think, be more fairly done than in his own words. Have you kept any of his letters that you think would answer my purpose? so many people burn letters, particularly people having so many letters as you have, but if you have any either grave or gay that would be worth printing will you kindly let me know. I wrote to M^r Moxon yesterday to ask him if he would like to become the publisher. M^r FitzGerald has been most kind and helpful to me. Indeed the Memoir part will I think be mostly written by him. I shall let you know how it goes on.

"When my affairs will be settled I know not. If I can retain enough to keep my own home and my own pictures, books, &c about me, I can live on a little; thank God I have good health, and not many imaginary wants."

"CAISTOR, GT YARMOUTH,

"June 14th 1849.

"I received your letter, my dear friends, too late yesterday morning to obey your injunction of getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning to answer it. Seeing that it was breakfast time when it was put into my

hand. I wished to sit down at once and reply to it but M^{rs} Salmon had invited her eldest sister here for a night and two days, partly on my account, so I could not well seclude myself during that time, but it shall be replied to *this morning*, for indeed it has been my intention to write every day for a long time to you. I have been here for the last 3 weeks, but I return to Bawburgh on Saturday I expect, where I suppose I shall be a little while, and then go to Woodbridge, where I have business which will delay me a little longer till I go into Hampshire.

"I cannot tell you exactly how the Subscription List stands (for the Memoir and Poems edited by FitzGerald—ED.) because I have not heard the number *lately*, but it must be something over 600 copies subscribed for. M^{rs} Shawe herself has procured for me nearly, if not quite 100. M^r Donne has got me Prince Albert and many other names, especially in Norfolk. M^r Hudson Gurney who had been written to by M^r Donne sent a messenger to me the other day begging me to put his name down for 2 copies & saying the kindest things of my dearest Father. M^r Hudson Gurney is *not* a Quaker!

"I have often thought if I lived in London I should try to get some employment as Corrector of the Press; it would be a very pleasant way of earning money, and a thing a lady could do—did it ever strike you? John Candler's landlord is a corrector of the Press for Hansard, and one of his fellow lodgers was for Longmans.

"With every good wish,

"LUCY BARTON."

“WOODBRIDGE, *Aug.* 20.

“Believe me, my dear kind friends, I have thought of you many, many times since your cordial greeting, and posting into town the other day. I did not come to a *settlement* however on the important question so readily as might have been expected, but lingered and lingered. It is however decided. I have given up Warrington, and I want a summons from M^{rs} Gurney whenever her niece leaves the seaside, which I suppose, if all goes well, will be in September. I paid my visit to Whitelands on Friday, and was most kindly received by M^{rs} Field and Miss Lowman, but I became more than ever convinced that the office required an *energy* which I do not *at present* possess. I should not have shrunk from it a year ago, and by God's blessing I may have the same strength a year *hence*, if I live; but you cannot tell how *shattered* I sometimes feel by all that I have gone through during the past few months, and things seem a burden to me now which formerly were like play. Under these circumstances, it seemed to me that the *Gurney home* offered enough of *occupation*, and promised also the *repose* which I really need. Any rate, if my engagement with them does not seem a permanent one, I shall not be *less* fit for any thing else when I give this up, but I may remain there longer than I think for: I have tried to decide for the best, and must now leave it.

“I have paid a visit of a week at Kesgrave since my return from town, there I made my decision, and thence I wrote my letters to the different parties. The book is printing fast, and the portrait has orders to be printed off, so hope all my business will be completed 'ere long. Do write to me, and

let me see your handwriting sometimes. I keep up as well as I can, but I get wofully flat sometimes, and all Saturday I could have cried, and *did* whenever I was alone.—I *think* I shall not go into Hampshire before I go to Mrs Gurney. If I pass thro' London, it shall not be without seeing you.

“y^r ever affectly

“LUCY BARTON.”

Mary Betham who, through the Bartons, knew FitzGerald, remarked of him, “He was *very* clever, but full of egregious follies.” But this the dear old lady said when over eighty, and inclined to be a little severe in her judgments.

Side by side with the foregoing letters, yet of more modern date, is a string of somewhat efflorescent paragraphs on Fitzgerald. A little alcove may be made for them here.

EDWARD FITZGERALD.

“As to Edward Fitzgerald, the true womb that shapes a Genius is the Universe itself, and it must be underlined as an addendum to his pedigree, that his birth occurred at the period when England begins to shake herself free from cloud. The couple of human beings who were his immediate racial predecessors, serve but to mark how unlike are parents to children of genius. It is in this type that the world unites. He was something more than the son of Papa and Mamma FitzGerald. The primary biographical fact of his life is that he entered Time when light was on the increase, and with his eyes turned towards Beauty. All of

which may seem to come perilously near to partnership in those astrologic prognostications that roused the scientific ichor of Hudibras,

‘As if Men from the Stars did suck
Old-age, Diseases, and ill-luck,’

but by substituting seasonal for planetary influences, the prejudicial alliance is avoided. A more laconic rendering of the natal event is that FitzGerald was born with the blossoms.

The second vital fact about FitzGerald’s childhood is that his earliest glances fell on that part of England which Constable and Gainsborough have made known to mankind. His effective school was where he learnt the alphabet of land and sea in the south-eastern angle of Suffolk. Nowhere else in the world do four navigable rivers like Stour, Orwell, Deben, and Alde draw together from a verdant table-land and meet within a limit of some ten miles on a rough and exhilarating shore. It is a part where the contrast of snug shadows and fat fields, with wind-torn seas and wreck-strewn mouths is always in appeal. It is a country where the human interest remains elemental and strong.

The nascent Scholar-Gipsy was scarcely to be reckoned unfortunate in his home, though it was somewhat odd. It disclosed a vacuum in the matter of common-sense that was startling, but there were compensations. His father was an inefficient, kindly man, big of body and hale of cheek. He could sit a horse well, but in ordinary affairs was unable to take care of himself, much less of others. It is, however, pretty sure because of his marriage, that

he possessed a kind of dumb distinction, and the full quorum of passive virtues.

FitzGerald's mother was an elegantly ostentatious woman of the scentless-rose sort. She is said to have imbued him with a liking for the drama, and, less happily, for the sexton-witted verse of the otherwise robust and cheerful Rev. George Crabbe. He was aware of the vulnerable side of himself and his near kin. Writing when grey-headed, he refers to the FitzGeralds as the "Bally blunder family, of which I am a legitimate offspring:" and again, "the FitzGeralds are all mad, mad, mad!"; and in another version, "the FitzGeralds are all mad, but my brother John is the only one who doesn't know it." More conclusive testimony of the fundamental sanity of FitzGerald than these remarks of his could scarcely be given in a world at present composed of a preponderating and respectable section in the position of brother John.

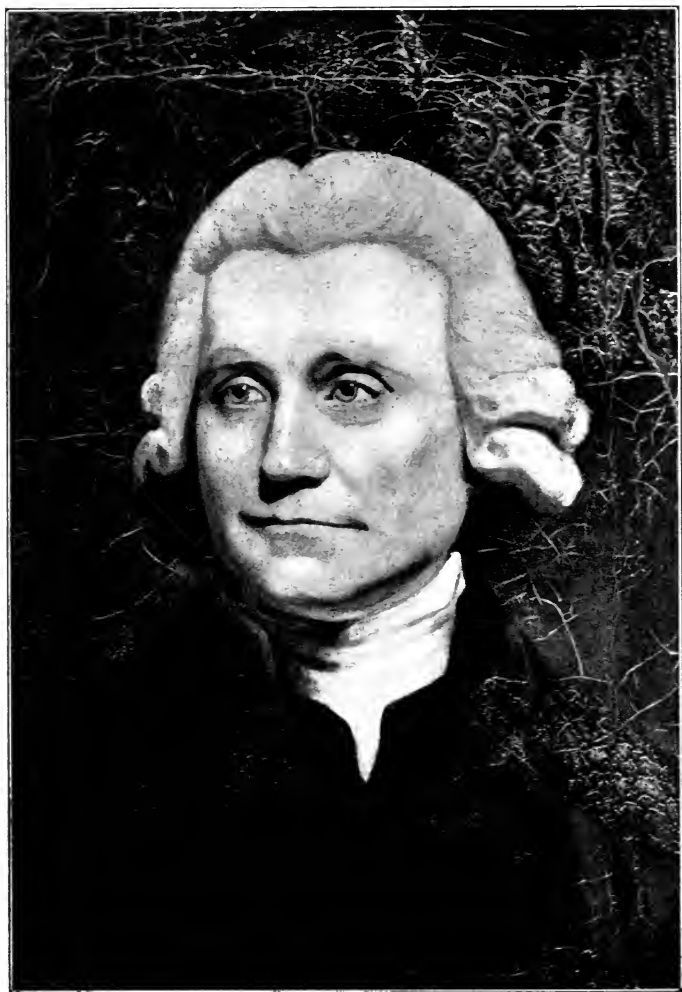
The young Edward appears to have been untrammelled intellectually. Perhaps it was the happiest befalling that the broad-browed, deep-eyed boy should have been let alone to develop himself by the natural light within him. He grew up a mental freeman: that, in his case, was everything.

As to his two brothers, unusual as they were almost bound to be, coming from such a household, they were both unusual on the amiable side. John, the eldest, when he succeeded his father at Boulge, took the place of a comic journal to the witlings of the neighbourhood on account of his hunting souls instead of foxes. Yet his most outrageous libeller would always conclude with the affectionate

eulogium, "Ah, but he is a good fellow." Peter, the second son, among other deeds, married his cook, "an honest wise woman," and lived happy ever after.

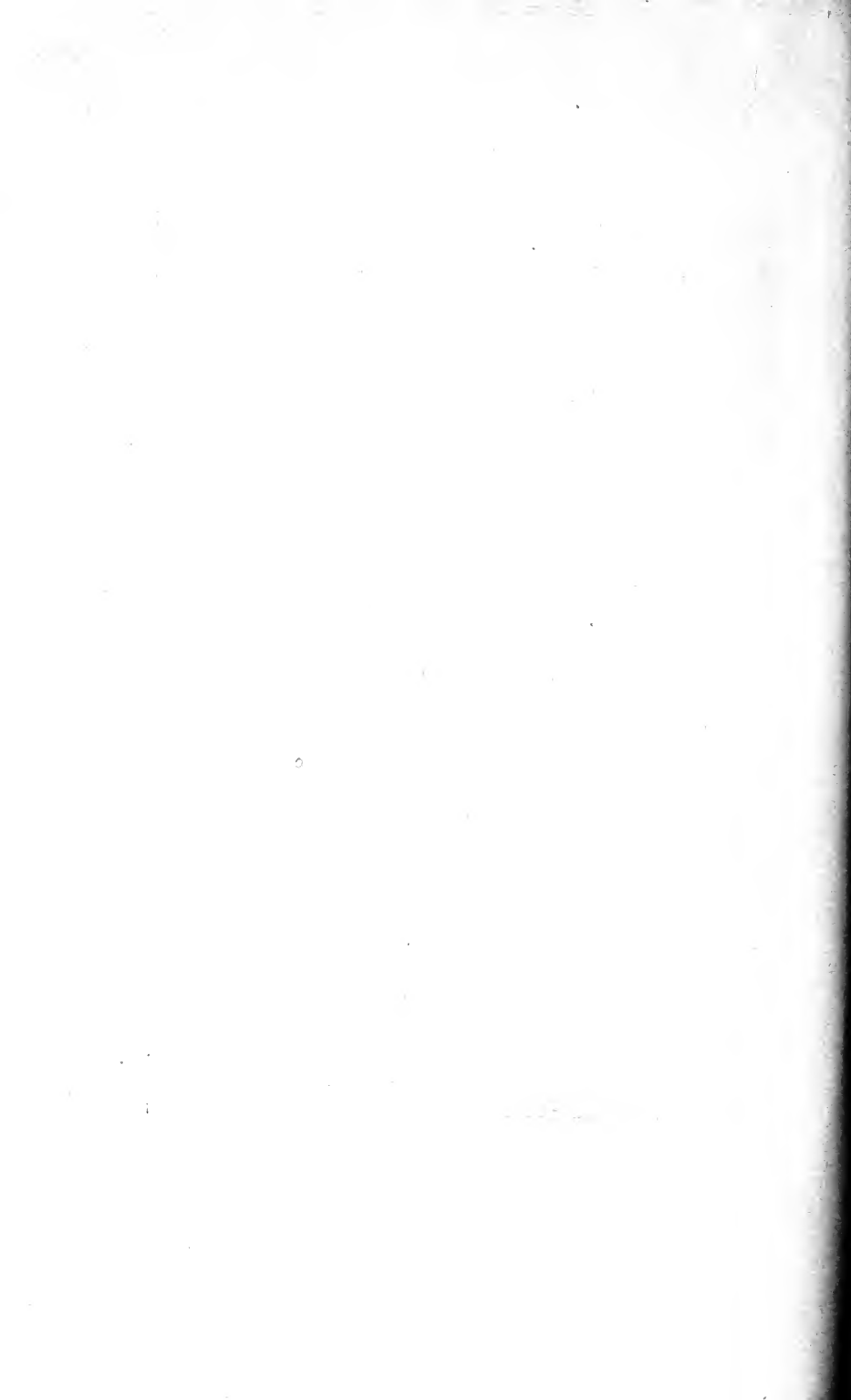
The zone of the four rivers runs transversely across between FitzGerald's birthplace, Bredfield Hall, and the German Ocean. It is noticeable that his life was spent mostly in the open air, and mostly here. The eastern expanse of water attracted his boyhood with all that sense of the illimitable which ocean must always possess for a lively imagination. The Hall faces both the sun-rising and the sea; and though the latter is ten miles beyond, sometimes it becomes visible. The power of vicinity secured to FitzGerald he should not grow up with social aspects over-conventionalized: The ancient crafts of fishing and fighting imprinted themselves on his boyish vision through the trawlers' boats and the naval deck. And by the blossoming sea-edge, beyond the headlands, the constant sails of Norwegian and other craft coming and going out of the horizon's clouds made real the 'far, far away.' It was the city, with its continuous cage-like foreground, that remained to him the unfamiliar thing.

Touching his boyhood, the deduction may be ventured, not without a shade of certainty, that if among his school-fellows flourished any embryo Apollo he would have temporarily constituted the youth his heart's idol. No doubt, in course of time, the transfigured urchin would give indubitable proof that he was but honest clay after all, and temporarily darken the universe for FitzGerald. By actual record he is given as being a good speaker and a presentable lad, "FitzGerald Minor always having one of the speeches on speech-



EDWARD BEETHAM,
Of Little Strickland, Westmorland, and Chancery Lane, London.

From an oil-painting attributed to Opie.



day." Chief token of his disposition is found in the knowledge that his friendship was sought and acquired by several of the ablest and most sterling characters in the school, diverse in mood and talent among themselves but discovering a common ground of sympathy in him. In more than one case it was "a marriage of true minds," and the alliance thus begun was to endure throughout life. Thus early did FitzGerald give sign of possessing that highest gift of being friend-worthy. Long after the smoothness and bloomtime had vanished, and when winter with its crows had come to the boughs the old amity was still vital, maintaining an uninterrupted avenue back to the distant House of Youth that shone the more perfect and beautiful for the intervening light.

Who can get any real glimpse at FitzGerald save through the young wanderer under the great sky and by the unenclosed sea? His most intimate hours when his mental character was taking shape were given to the remote land of the waters. From the beginning the force of his life was inward. Copious and pleasant chronicles have we received of FitzGerald, but, in their proportion at least, they deal with the rich squire's son, with the enthused artist and musician, with the painstaking author, and the eccentric-seeming ancient of Woodbridge, rather than with the spirit whose utterance has caught the ear of his time."

PART IV.

THE LLANTHONY MAZE.

LANDOR'S name occurs more than once in the Betham papers. The Llanthony episode calls for a little clearer illumination than Forster's knowledge permitted him to yield it.

The longitudinal extravaganza contained in Lamb's letter to Landor, quoted by Forster, was not original to it, but was the repetition of a passage written years before in an essay, over the signature of "Lepus." Both in the essay and the letter his object was to amuse the reader. The letter to Landor kites away with a tail paper-plumed from the old "Lepus" essay. The identity of the children of Lepus' "old friend Captain Beacham," with the "Welsh annoyancers," is no identity of fact.

John Betham was the only "Captain" Betham Lamb knew; he was neither Lamb's "old friend," being eleven years the essayist's junior, nor had he more than one son, who at the time of the matutinal repentance of Lepus was just five years old. As to the name "Beacham," and the salt-sea ravener, probably more captains than one in the East India Company's service possessed two-syllabled names, beginning with the second unit of the alphabet.

And more returned Anglo-Indians than one may have told a shark story.

Forster quotes a letter from Southey. Southey's worthy, but not rare or fathomless mind, seems to have become deflected by the personality of Landor. The tenor of the missive is to the effect that the Llanthony tenant's eldest sister, while being of "good stock," like several notable and uncommon people when in contact with the conventional, did not always exhibit that sapience of which, by inference, Landor and Southey each day of their lives gave convincing exhibition; and that the ways of young sailors were too breezy for the scholarly quiet of Greta Hall. As to Matilda Betham, Southey's anxiety to propitiate Landor, and Forster's to defend him, is more obvious than why her name should have been brought into the unmannerly farce.

According to the biographer, "Betham had used Southey's name to introduce himself to Landor as a tenant, and had been accepted, he and his family, with open arms in consequence." Forster, however, had not seen the following letter:—

"KESWICK,

"*Oct. 30th, 1811.*

"You will think it very odd if I should prove the means of suiting your brother with a farm. Landor has one to let upon an improving lease. It is in the vale of Ewias, where Llanthony Abbey stands, and where he is building a house for himself. Abergavenny is the market town, at a distance of nine miles.

"Now I should tell you that a brother of Mrs. Wordsworth's has been to look at this land, and

declined it because the vale is too narrow, the hills too steep, and Landor will have no trouble in building farm-houses, tho' he is ready to find materials; but he admits the soil is the best possible.

"I have been looking over my letters to find the exact words of Landor himself: 'I have several hundred acres to let instantly for a pound an acre, tithe free, extremely small parochial rates, a lease for twenty-one years, but after the first ten a rise of four shillings per acre. Many thousands of land to be enclosed at three shillings for the first (?)0 years, six for the remaining. A rail now forming within a mile along a level to the market town; lime and marl on the estate, and underwood sufficient for all the new enclosures which will be given. I hope to get a scientific tenant for about 1,600 acres. He shall have every encouragement, but he should have £6 or 7000.'

"These are his words. Should your brother think it worth while to write, his address is 'Walter Savage Landor, Llanthony, Abergavenny.'" Let him use my name as an introduction. Were Llanthony not so far from town, I should advise him to go there and see it. It is a beautiful, but very lonely spot. There could be no society there except Landor himself, but then you know there is but one Landor in the world.

"God bless you. As this is a letter of business I shall not delay it by sending it cruising for a frank. Edith's love.

"Yours very truly,

"R. SOUTHEY."

As to Lantor's fitness for the career he had chosen, we read, "Less than four years had brought his affairs to such a pass as utterly to disgust him with Llanthony, Wales, and the Welsh. There was scarcely one of his undertakings but had proved abortive. There was scarcely a public authority of his district against whom he had not had a grievance, or a neighbour, high or low, with whom he had not come into collision, or a tenant or a labourer on his estate who had not turned against him."

Lantor purchased Llanthony in 1809. Charles Betham was not introduced there by Southey till late in the year 1811. His actual tenancy did not begin before January, 1812. Charles Betham was five years the younger (thirty-two).

Forster states that Charles Betham held "open house for his brothers and sisters, his father, and his father's friends." Doubtless, the "friends" was an imaginative multiplication of Mr. Edward Edwards, of Westerfield Hall, near Ipswich, a Suffolk farmer, whose knowledge would have been serviceable to his brother-in-law. The upbringing of the Bethams in rural Suffolk (then, with Norfolk, reckoned agriculturally the most advanced and scientific part of England), made them farmers from the first. Their father, though employing some hours in his library, kept one foot on the land, in which he took hereditary interest. He always had a few acres in cultivation, could put his own plough through the stubble, and in matters horticultural was a local pioneer.

But if Forster expanded the "friends," he merged Charles Betham and his younger brother

Frederick into one. He refers to the former as having been an "usher in a school, and then a petty officer on board an East India Company's ship." Landor himself aimed these charges at Frederick Betham, who was twenty-one at the time, and had left the sea to settle down as a farmer. He had gone to Llanthony to help his brother. He lived and died a practical agriculturist. Forster omitted to state, and probably did not know, that Landor had to pay damages to him for libel.

By the inclusion among the papers of a letter from Charles Betham to the county journal, intact, save for a few lines at the commencement, he himself may be heard:—

(First paragraph missing).

" It was not necessary for Mr. Landor to state that I have never paid him any rent—and I assert, if he had done so, and had added that I had procured any Injunction unduly, or that my brother had declared, that I should hold my farms four years without paying any rent, he would also have stated what was both unnecessary and untrue. I have occupied Mr. Landor's farms two years. By the agreement under which I entered upon them, I was to make considerable expenditure on the buildings, &c., which was to be allowed out of the rent. On this account, and for compensation for non-performance of parts of the agreement, Mr. Landor became considerably indebted to me within the first year. When the rent became due I made my claims. He disputed them, and required my assent to his own arbitrary statement of the account, which included other subjects than the rent and allowances.

I was indebted to Mr. Landor for some stock and labour on the farms, the appraisement of which had not been completed, and I paid his agent money on his account. I refused to admit Mr. Landor's statement ; but when his agent threatened to enforce payment of the rent, I offered whatever he demanded for it to prevent a suit, and to leave the rest for future adjustment. My offer was declined : Mr. Landor still insisting that I should subscribe to his statement ; and I was soon served with a writ, in an action brought to recover the rent and the money due for stock and labour. It being obviously impossible accounts of the nature I was involved in should be settled in an action at law, I was compelled to file a Bill in Equity, and by this bill offered to pay whatever I might owe when a balance was struck ; praying that till then, Mr. Landor might be restrained by injunction from suing me at law. This bill was filed on the 30th of June, and Mr. Landor served about the same time with a subpœna to appear and answer to it. No answer was given till February last. In the meantime, in November, I had offered to refer all the accounts to private arbitration, as the more expeditious method of settling them, and ascertaining what I was to pay. Mr. L. declined this, unless I would also refer the action brought by me against him for a libel on my character ; and I believe, but am less certain, my brother's action also ; conditions obviously inadmissible. In the same interval, as the end of a second year approached, I took measures to extend the Injunction till he answered my bills and settled my accounts. The answer, when given, was considered by my Counsel evasive, and exceptions were taken to it, which, as Mr. L. states, have been

overruled. The injunctions have been dissolved ; and it would ill become me to say upon insufficient grounds, though I had the best advice that they must necessarily be sustained, subject, perhaps, to certain conditions.

“ That the Court of Exchequer has awarded Mr. Landor a demand of £1,968 17s. 6d. is untrue. The dissolving the Injunction leaves him at liberty to sue me for rent, and, abandoning his action, he has distrained to the amount of that sum. I, however, deny that I owe him half so much. I have replevied his distresses. This will, I understand, unavoidably create further delay ; but it is impossible to make greater exertions than I have already to prevent this delay, and to put all the accounts between us in a train of speedy adjustment. Such are the objects for which my Bill was filed, and the Injunctions obtained ; nor am I conscious of any fact being mis-stated, otherwise than as the forms of pleading may require particular allegations which are perfectly understood to be but formal. If they have been obtained on frivolous pretences, or on falsehood, it is not likely that with such exertions as were made to overrule them, they would have existed for ten months. No such declaration as Mr. Landor represents, was ever heard by Wm. Addis. The only remark made to him on the subject, came from one of my brothers (least acquainted with the transactions between me and Mr. L.), who stated his opinion, and nothing more—that if the money I had lent to the latter, with the expenditure and compensations I was entitled to, were allowed, it would be four years before I should owe any rent. It is equally untrue that I ever acknowledged any balance, which was

accepted in part of what I owed him. I once paid his agent £300 generally, on Mr. Landor's account. I afterwards, as I have stated, offered to pay any sum that was demanded for rent, to prevent an action ; but declined adopting Mr. Landor's statement of the account, which I did, and do contend, was incorrect and unfair.

"Mr. Landor states a proposal made by him to Mr. Adair (to whom I shall always with pride acknowledge my obligations), to appoint that gentleman judge of our differences. This it would be difficult to reconcile with the refusal which my offers to refer have met with. But when it is considered that Mr. L. was not known to Mr. Adair, and that it was made without purporting to be with my concurrence, I think little doubt will be felt that he expected Mr. Adair would decline it, and that it was hazarded for the purpose of giving to his proceedings an appearance of candour which did not really belong to them.

"Mr. Landor must have strangely and suddenly altered his opinion of the management of the farms, if he believed what he stated to Mr. Adair—that it threatened ruin either to them or to his tenants. He had previously bestowed the most unvaried and unqualified praise on my system of management ; repeatedly declaring 'that I had done more to improve his estates than had been done before me from the days of the flood !' Every farmer, I am sure, would and will confirm this testimony. Such meadows as I have ploughed up—it was part of the plan on which I took the estate—should be ploughed. Provisions were inserted in the agreement, intended to free me from every restraint.

Whether they are sufficient for their purpose is a question now in progress to be decided.

“It would, till lately, have surprised me to find Mr. Landor quoting assertions of Francis Robbins, of the acts of kindness which he boasts to have done me. I remember none so great as his cautioning me, when I came into the country, against him. From the character he gave, I thought he had done a public good, as he prided himself in having done, in ‘silencing Robbins.’ I might cite passages from many of his letters to this purport, but shall content myself with declaring that, however Mr. Landor may pretend to have altered his opinion of this man, and though his evidence is now produced against me and my family on every occasion and question, the representations which Mr. Landor states him to have made are utterly groundless and false. They are refuted by a letter I have from Mr. Landor, written many months after I am stated unnecessarily to have declared myself not worth £4,000, describing the particulars of all his manor and estates, with estimates of the annual value, and proposing to me to take a lease of the whole, including his house. I shall not be provoked to commit so great an impropriety as publishing these particulars.

“The assertion that the Timber, which I prevented him from removing, was cut down to enable him to grant me indulgences, has already been made in a Bill of Equity against me, and denied on my oath; I solemnly repeat that denial. I had consented to the trees being grubbed up, that I might plough the land; and when Mr. Landor cut them down, and refused to grub up the roots, I refused

my permission to their being removed. He attempted it by force, arming men and women to invade my fields. I met his hosts with very inferior numbers, armed as I could provide them, and maintained my ground. If a bayonet was ever aimed at the game-keeper's wife, it must have been on this occasion; but I am both ignorant and careless whether such a circumstance did really occur. An action was brought to punish me for this resistance: I defended it, and it was dropped. A Bill was then filed to prohibit my obstructing the removal of the Timber. In my answer, I maintained my old ground, that the condition on which I had consented to the trees being removed, the grubbing up of the roots, had not been complied with; and by the same order which authorizes him to remove the trees, he is directed, without delay, to cause the roots and stools to be properly and effectually grubbed up; and I was awarded costs.

"So far from my destroying or wasting any hewn or ornamental Stones, I declare I have made my people preserve every one they have ever met with, and have forbore from exercising liberties given me by Mr. Landor, from the sole motive of preserving the ornamented Stone about the Abbey. I have also done all that I could to ensure the preservation of the Orchard Stocks; though so far from having promised, or being under the least obligation to preserve them, I refused to buy them when they were offered me, and declared that I could not allow them to remain. There is an assertion about breaking down fences which I do not understand, and therefore cannot answer. The Sawpit, I certainly prevented Mr. Landor from using; but on the

avowed principle, which I still profess, that while I wish to accommodate my neighbours, I will not suffer encroachments to be made upon my property, in open and insulting defiance to my will. The Sawpit in question is mine ; and Mr. Landor only attempted to make use of it as an exercise of right, which I deny belongs to him.

“The raising of the Sheep-cot was announced to Mr. Landor before it was begun ; and the avowed object was to prevent his annoying me by obstructing a drain and inundating my house, and digging a sawpit in the Abbey yard close to my windows ; which, when finished, his men came (I was from home), and, on this very sawpit, insulted my family by singing the most obscene songs.

“Mr. Landor says that an untruth is asserted by Mr. Jervis, when he is represented to have become a Bill-sticker ; but he does not question the veracity of the witness who proved the fact ; and while the evidence remains unshaken, Mr. Landor must not expect to alter the opinion entertained of such conduct. It will not be accomplished by the misrepresentation and sophistry of his present letter. What he calls threats, were messages sent to him by my brother that I would not allow trees, planted since my possession, and in defiance of me, to remain. The men, who Mr. L. says were sent to watch, were avowedly taken as witnesses that my brother was not afraid to dispute a right claimed by him, whose name was formidable throughout the neighbourhood. The pretence that pulling up half a dozen trees will destroy half a million is only ridiculous. I know, indeed, but of a very small part of this half million, but shall, as I

discover them, give every protection. The right of increasing them on my land I still deny, and shall resist.

"It proves nothing to affirm the dingle was reserved out of the leases to preceding tenants. I pay rent for it; and when I complained of this as a hardship, because it had before been excluded from the farm, Mr. L. reminded me that every man was to be bound by his own bargain. Mr. Jervis's observation that Mr. Landor kept back the instrument by which I held, is quoted, but not answered. It was immaterial what references had been given me to a former tenant. Mr. Landor, on the trial, declined showing my agreement or attempting to prove I was bound by any stipulation of Robbins's. If Mr. Phillimore even gave the opinion he is represented to have given, a fact difficult to believe of a gentleman well deserving the praise Mr. Landor gives him, he must have been misled by the statement laid before him. Such an opinion will not prove Mr. Landor's only error has been in the nomenclature of the law. The Judge, upon the trial, declared that, as he knew why, and under what circumstances the trees were pulled up, he must have known the act was not felonious.

"I deny that I have driven Mr. Landor from the country. If he had nothing to disturb him but my proceedings, he might have remained there at perfect ease. I have constantly confined myself to measures of defence, and shall not even now be provoked to exceed this line. The insinuation, that we could find but one witness to prove our being received in the families of gentlemen in the neighbourhood, is scarcely entitled to notice. Twenty could not have

strengthened the evidence of that one : if more had been required I should not have despaired of obtaining their good offices, though Mr. Landor has tried his utmost to influence everyone he could against us. I can venture to affirm that no *falsehoods* were ever propagated by my family in Bath or elsewhere. It is perfectly true that he long owed me money. In December, 1811, before I even entered on any of the farms, I lent him about £1,400, which was to have been repaid me in a few weeks ; but, even according to his own statement, was not for nine months, though I was put to serious inconvenience by the disappointment.

“Mr. Landor’s sympathy in the wrongs he represents my servants to have suffered, would excite some surprise, if it were not apparent with what design it is affected. In him, indeed, any man who has made an exorbitant or unjust demand against me, has found a ready friend and supporter. The most extraordinary encouragement has been given them to go to law with me, in two cases with success. As to my Bailiff, he left me with the warmest expressions of gratitude. To the Miller, on discharging him, I gave every farthing he claimed, as I have his bills to testify ; and never heard of any further demand except by Mr. Landor’s letter, and a report propagated by Robbins, by whom this man has been encouraged to remain in the mill-house for nine months, which prevents my letting the mill.

“The answers to the remaining statements are extremely short and simple. That he should have heard reasons why my brother ceased to be an Usher, is impossible, since my brother never was an Usher or Assistant in any school whatever—that he went

out with a company of poachers, and dined with them at the public-house, is most untrue ; he never was in any such company ; never ate or drank in the public-house ; and, if I am rightly informed as to the party to which Mr. Landor alludes, my brother neither saw nor was near them.

“The quibbling on the phrase ‘Inferior Officer,’ shows only that Mr. Landor desires to do us an injury, which he fears to attempt openly. As it was never pretended that my brother commanded an East India ship, it never could be pretended that he was not an Inferior Officer (Frederick Betham, the mid-shipman.—ED.). But Mr. L. does not deny that he used the phrase invidiously, designing to create a belief that my brother did not belong to what is commonly understood of the rank of an Officer, for that is no degradation to which all must necessarily submit. He is unwilling to declare that this was not his intention, and afraid to avow that it was. I know not on what occasion my brother did, or could declare, he was my bailiff. I can conceive that it may often have been necessary for him to declare he was acting under my authority ; and if he has ever added that he was on such occasions my bailiff, everybody must understand the expression to have imported that he possessed authority from me for particular purposes, and not that he held a menial office.

“I cannot help repeating, that it is with great pain, I have performed the task of answering Mr. Landor’s assertions ; and found it necessary, though I have confined myself to that, and wholly forbore from recrimination, to enter into so long a statement. But I have been more exact and particular, in hopes of

presenting its being necessary for me ever to publish again. If I have succeeded to the extent which I flatter myself I have, Mr. Landor's word will, I think, be felt of so little weight, that I may safely disregard all future attempts which he may make to injure my character and credit.

"C. BETHAM.

"Llanthony Abbey, *June 23rd*, 1814."

Forster himself, had he known the actual facts, would doubtless have given drastic revision to his Llanthony passages, somewhat after the nature of the following :

"Betham's worst troubles at Llanthony did not, however, proceed from the narrowness of the vale, the over-steepness of the hills, and the trouble of building farm-houses, but from the impracticability of his landlord, to whom he had looked for support and encouragement. This was Landor, one of the most amazing Englishmen ever born with a song in him. Landor had used Southey to get him a tenant, and Betham, trusting to Southey, came to terms. Owing to his landlord's mismanagement, one or two farms other than the one first leased to Betham, had become derelict, and Betham was induced to become tenant of these also, though Landor, on whose intelligent co-operation everything depended, knew nothing of agriculture or estate management, his previous career, since his rustication from Oxford for putting a charge of shot into a man's shutters, having been that of a literary enthusiast and an amateur soldier. He had outrun his allowance during his father's life, and subsequent to his inheriting a fortune, had displayed noticeable

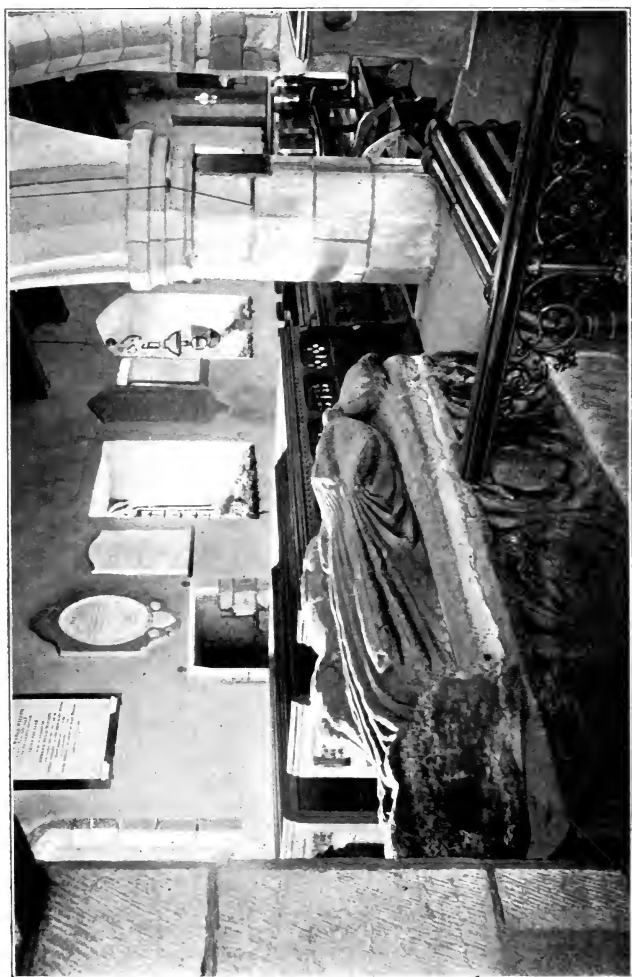
prodigality in the matter of horses, carriages, servants, plate, pictures, and the like. Llandor seems soon to have become harassed for money. He came to cross-purposes with his tenant, and when Betham at last lost patience and took measures of defence, Llandor leagued himself with Betham's discharged miller and others, and endeavoured to make his tenant's existence intolerable. His fields were invaded, his trees cut down, his outbuildings locked up, his saw-pits attempted, and his character libelled. He was plunged up to the neck in lawsuits. This Llandor is the same, who, when old, in a sacred moment of humility, showed himself possessed of a reserve of cool judgment, denied to his biographer, for he wrote, 'I never did a single wise thing in the whole course of my existence, altho' I have written many which have been thought such.'"

PART V.

THE CARVED ESCUTCHEONS.

THERE are some minds so lamentably modern as to take no external signs and badges seriously except scientific and learned degrees, which they, or their friends, attach to the rear of their names like the legs of a centipede. These unsympathetic people will take to flight before any dissertation on the old Social Degrees of Coats of Arms. Anything that is honestly pretty to look at, deserves regard, and Heraldry is a very pretty art. The three blue fleur-de-lys of the Bethams, displayed on their golden field, are a delight to the eye, and if for no other reason than that, shall here be accounted for. The following paper having been placed at the editor's disposal, he willingly inserts it.

The armorial bearings of the Bethams, according to West in his "Antiquities of Furness Abbey," consisted of "Argent a chief dancette sable," attributed to Ralph de Betham (*circa* 1180). But though West was esteemed a learned antiquary, present knowledge points to his attribution of the coat described being an error. As far as is known, official armorial recognition of Betham is first found in a Parliamentary Roll of Arms wherein Sir



INTERIOR OF BETHLEHAM CHURCH, SHOWING THE OLD TOMB.



Thomas de Betham, M.P. for Westmorland, 30 Edw. I to 4 Edward II. (1301—10) is given "Lozengy ar. and sab.;" a piece—a mere fragment—of ancient stained glass in Beetham Church displays this charge. This fragment is one of the very few remains of stained glass left in the church after the wreckage done by the hand of a destroyer of images of the name of Sill, assisted by some of Fairfax's soldiers, who also defaced the Betham tomb, evidently mistaking it and the windows for Roman Catholic cabala. There can be no doubt that the arms named were those borne by Sir Thomas, but whether they were borne by his ancestors or not nothing tells. However, despite the evidence of the Parliamentary Roll of Arms, certain it is that the arms of Sir Thomas's direct descendant, Sir John de Betham, M.P. for Westmorland 8 Henry IV. (1406-7) and his successors were "Three Fleur de Lys." In the window of the "Inlaid Room" of Sizergh Castle,* Westmorland, is a coat of arms, Strickland quartering Betham and Burton, the bearing to Betham being the triple fleur de lys. (Burton was a quartering of Betham.) Sir Thomas de Stirkland, or Strickland, bearer of the banner St. George at Agincourt, married Mabel, daughter of the Sir John de Betham named.†

It is impossible to account for the change in the arms. But, whatever the cause may have been, the "Three Fleur de Lys" became the hereditary arms of the family, with the exception of the Bethams

* The oak furniture and panelling of this room is now preserved at Kensington.

† "Strickland of Sizergh," Bellasis. Whitaker's "Richmondshire," i., 334.

of Burton and the Bethams of Rowington, to be afterwards mentioned.

The arms on the tomb in Beetham church have puzzled Westmorland heralds. Nicholson and Burns say, "In the herald's office the arms of Betham are or, three flower de lys argent,* and these latter are depicted in a window of the gallery of the Old Hall of Leighton, expressly by the name of Betham, and yet on the monument in Betham church, whereon are the effigies of a man and woman cut in stone, which undoubtedly has been erected in memory of some of the Betham family, amongst the several escutcheons found there, the flower de lys do not appear."

After describing the various arms upon the tomb they (Nicholson and Burns) add, "Under the head of the woman there is a vacancy large enough for another coat, but there is none, nor does it appear that any hath been defaced." Bellasis, in his "Westmorland Church Notes," fails to come to any conclusion with regard to some of the escutcheons, and makes the note, "This tomb would seem in some respects a hard heraldic nut for Westmorland to crack."

It is now held that this tomb-monument was put up by Thomas Middleton, of Leighton, in memory of his father, Sir Robert Middleton, and his mother. Anne, heiress of the elder line of the Bethams. These Middletons by this marriage became the overlords of Betham and Burton, and resided at Leighton. In the churches of Burton and Wharton (co. Lancs.), close to Leighton, can be seen the arms

* A mistake for azure.

of Middleton quartering Betham and Burton, etc., the Betham coat being three fleur de lys. The shields in Wharton church are beautiful examples of the carver's art of the early seventeenth century. They bear date 1614. A book-plate, dating from the beginning of the 18th century, is preserved in the Bible of John Betham, of Strickland, with the Fleur-de-Lys Coat depicted quartered with Burton.

The quarterings of the coat as given by Nicholson and Burns in their description of the armorial bearings in the window at Leighton Hall are Betham, Burton, FitzRoger, and Banister. The Betham coat of the three fleur de lys with the quarterings of Burton, FitzRoger, Banister and Damant of Eye together with the crest described below is depicted upon the Betham Pedigree recorded in the Ulster Office of Arms in 1815. The quartering for Damant of Eye was inherited by Sir William from his mother. The Damants, or Dammants, were an old Huguenot family, whose peculiar coat of arms is thus described, "Sable, a Turnip leaved proper, a chief, or gutté-de-paix." The appearance of the turnip in Armory is interesting, and by no means modern. It appears in the Zurich "Wappenrolle" of the first half of the 14th century.

Two branches of the family did not bear the fleur-de-lys, those of Burton and Rowington.

When the Burton lands came into possession of the Bethams of Betham through the marriage at the end of the thirteenth century of Thomas de Betham with Parnel, daughter and heiress of Sir Robert de Burton, a younger son of this match made his home at Burton Hall, and his descendants continued there till the middle of the eighteenth

century. The early generations of this branch seem to have taken the arms of Burton, differencing them with a bend gu. "Sir Richard Betham (Lancashire)* or, a chief indented az, and a bent gu."† Since 1817 the representatives of the Bethams of Burton have conformed, and now use the same arms as the other surviving branches of the family.

The Bethams of Bucks, and subsequently of Rowington in Warwickshire, had a distinct coat of arms. In the visitation of the Herald "William Harvye Clarenceaulx" to Buckinghamshire in 1566 he confirmed to Betham of Oxenden in that county the following arms and crest, "Ermine a chevron between three bores pass: sab. Crest, an elephant's head issuant out of a crown." This is one of the earliest examples of the use of the Elephant in English Armory. The Bethams of Rowington became extinct, but the crest granted to that branch of the family, namely, "an elephant's head issuant out of a crown," was, with certain differences, adopted by Sir William Betham. Writing to a correspondent in 1844, the latter said, "There did not appear any crest of the family, as was the case in many of the most ancient families of England. I therefore adopted the elephant's head, but in different colours to the Buckinghamshire branch."

* Burton was as frequently called in Lancashire as in Westmorland.

† Vincent's "Ordinary," vol. ii., 935.

PART VI.

LEAFY OUTWAYS.

LET us, as we leave, look backward. There is the eighteenth-century village of Little Strickland, with its trees and orchards and well-stocked gardens, surrounded by the high black moor of Shap Fell, like a sheltered oasis in a desert of heather. It rests in what is comparatively a hollow, and in the old years was connected with the coach road between Shap and Penrith by an unenclosed lane with a great capacity for keeping in the roughest condition.

Over a yew hedge could be seen the house in which William Betham was born, a long, grey, two-storied building with patches of yellow lichen tinting its stone walls and low gabled roof. Between it and the yew hedge was a smooth, trim plot of grass, and the latticed windows at the back peered over a flower garden protected on one side and across the foot by a second yew hedge, through the green mass of which an archway was cut that allowed a peep into the orchard beyond. A high ivied wall (upon the other side of it having peach trees) completed the garden square, a quadrangle bordered by deep flower beds, in summer banks of colour, and a broad gravel walk. In the centre of the lawn stood a

moss-covered sundial, round which the swallows darted, and at each of the four corners grew a "peg-top" cut yew tree. Beyond the orchard boughs rose the tops of straw ricks and the roofs of stables and barns. The low of the cattle, the drone of the bees, and the distant crank of the well wheel mingled together for the ear of the saunterer in the garden.

Books and gardens go together when gardens are places of retirement. Some of the books in the old house have been preserved down to the present, and throw a light, in their quaint way, upon the bygone inmates. Two are Gilbert Burnett's "History of the Reformation of the Church of England," published 1679. The inside of the cover and the fly-leaf are thickly written over and inscribed

"JOHANNIS BETHAM

EX

DONO AUTHORIS."

The following are a few of the entries by Edward Betham, the son of the original owner of the book:—

"On the 5th of Feb^r (being Shrove Tuesday) in the evening betwixt six & seven o.c Anno 1694 departed this fraile vain and transitory Life, my Joy and Delight, my dearly beloved daughter Elizabeth Betham in the 2nd Year of her Age: Being then received by Almighty God into those Heavenly Habitations where the Souls of them that sleep in the Lord surely enjoy perpetual rest & felicity."

'On the 27th of Novemb 1703 betw the Hours of One & Six o clock in the Morning Being Saturday happ'nd at Sea & thro' most places of the Kingdom

a direful Tempest and Hurrican, the wind being South west."

A Black letter Bible, published in 1620, and bound in rough leather, has many items of births, deaths, and marriages after this manner:—

"Edward, borne on the 18th day April anno 1653. God bless Him."

"My goode brother Francis died this Winter at London. We must alle die. The day is far spent and the night is at hande. The 4th day of March anno 1652."

"Anne borne on the 5th day of October anno 1663. God Keepe Her and Bless Her."

The old garden on one occasion had greater black-and-white treasure taken to it than books, to wit—title-deeds. When the Scots came through Westmorland in 1745 shady spots were speedily planted with parchments secure in case or box. Both the Bethams of Burton, and the Bethams of Little Strickland temporally converted their gardens into strong rooms. "My husband was out all Sunday and Monday, with John and the Men and horses. All the country is full of men to prevent the Highlanders. Poor Mother is very ill and troubled. God keep my good Man," wrote the mistress of the "long, grey house" at Little Strickland at that memorable time.

"Peg-top" yew trees, or yews otherwise trimmed to some fancy are plentiful in Westmorland. Maybe the wildness of the country enhances the charm of an ordered pleasaunce. A mountain increases its meaning when gazed at over a yew-tree peacock with a glow of bright blossoms beneath. Anyone lacking in affection to a clipped garden hedge, let

him or her spend more hours than intended where rockslides form the whole landscape. The aggressive curving and smoothing effected by Westmorland shears is man's retort to Nature's roughness all around.

Old William Betham's volumes display a book-plate, into which he shepherded tokens of his racial past and present. Backing a scroll in the foreground, show the ruins of a castle, while the scroll holds a presentment of the Stonham house, the "large cottage" whose hedge was graced with the sets of twin poplars, and through the cut thorn-bush windows of which fragrant outwork its planter looked at the village green when smoking his churchwarden on quiet eves. The Diarist has a little sketch of the stately yet genial man coming from the farm with a handful of turnips "held by the green, or a bundle of water-cress and the rake he drew it out of the stream with in his hands."

The whole of the Eastern counties may be called a garden, such an absence of barren land and such a fulness of verdure marking them. Many are the entries in Matilda Betham's early diaries of, "Went into the fields to read," and the like.

Passing to Cossey and Oxburgh, the "Benedict" haunted wood of the former, and the "pollard moved before the window" of the latter, appear reminiscently, and the "true country dulness," the rooks cawing, and the squire playing backgammon with the chaplain, while My Lady looks out across the lawn and flowers, her quill for the moment idle.

Much of the lives of those who have been met in the "House of Letters" was spent in the East Country. There church-towers and poplars catch

the sun's first blazon, and there colour abides. Colour no sun-offending cloud can blot out, colour whose fragrance sauntering footways thread.

At scythe-sharpening the whole land blazes tawny, streaked with the hues of the starry convolvulus. Press your ear close to the ground, and you will grow ware of a great heart-beating. And the skies are so high up there is room to breathe—this is the East Country. Moreover, all peripatetic vendors of umbrellas from the shires carry the same weight away under their arm as they bring to it. It never rains, or at least almost never. The rainfall records, compared under county headings, will give a solid substratum of fact for this statement. But we now stand at the gate, so, as the old book has it.

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FAREWELL.

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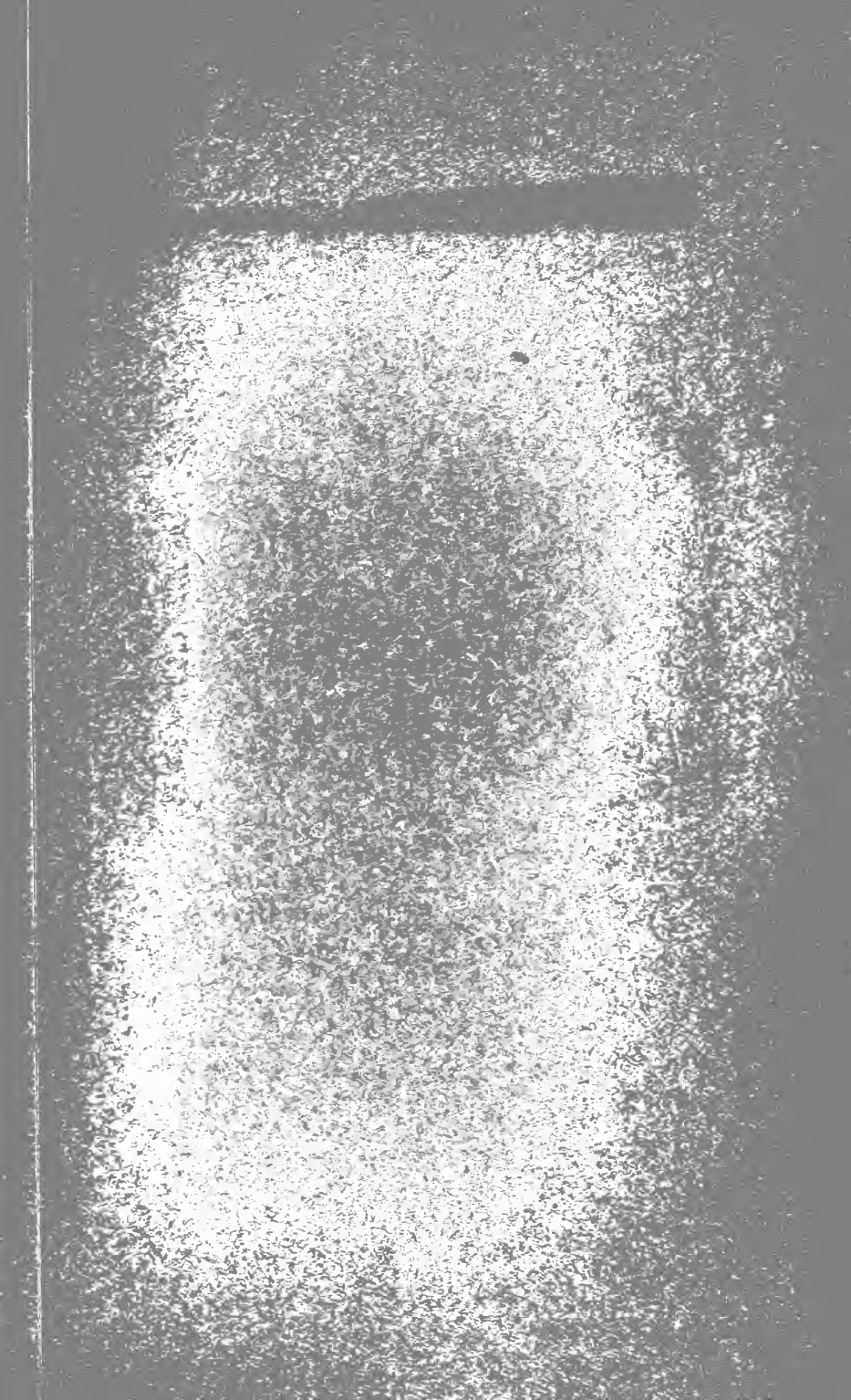
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